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THE CUMÆAN SIBYL (SISTINE CHAPEL)
Michelangelo

EDWIN WATTS CHUBB

AUTHOR OF

"MASTERS OF ENGLISH LITERATURE," ETC.

CINCINNATI
STEWART & KIDD COMPANY
1920

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EVE DOWNER CHUBB,

with thoughts of
The many pleasant hours we spent together
Years ago
In the art galleries of Europe.

"If you get simple beauty and nought else, You get about the best thing God invents;

you've seen the world

— The beauty and the wonder and the power,
The shapes of things, their colors, lights and shades,
Changes, surprises — and God made it all!

For, don't you mark? we're made so that we love
First when we see them painted, things we have passed
Perhaps a hundred times nor cared to see;
And so they are better, painted — better to us
Which is the same thing. Art was given for that."

Browning in Fra Lippo Lippi.

FOREWORD

These sketches are not intended for the connoisseur or the specialist. I am neither a professional art critic nor a painter with a theory of art. It is true I have spent many hours in the Vatican, the Pitti Palace, the Louvre, the National Gallery, the Uffizi, the Venice Academy, the Dresden Gallery, the Pinakothek of Munich, and also in the galleries of Berlin, Naples, Amsterdam, The Hague, Milan, Pisa, Genoa, New York, and Chicago, but I have been there merely as a lover of the beautiful. I am emboldened to publish these sketches because it has occurred to me that knowing so little about art I might be able to interest the "hoi polloi" who know. even less.

Although the names I have selected comprise a miscellaneous group, it will be noted that each one has made a distinct contribution to art, each one has an interesting personality; also that the list of painters, coming from various climes and belonging to various centuries, includes the greatest in the history of painting - Leonardo, Raphael, Michelangelo, Titian, Rubens, Rembrandt, and Velasquez.

One of the welcome manifestations of today is vii

the growing interest in art. Millionaires are spending vast sums for the purchase of European masterpieces, state legislatures are employing American artists to decorate the walls of government buildings, and municipal councils are supporting local museums of art. The past century has seen a wonderful work as man has steadily subdued the rough earth and acquired dominion over the elemental forces of a new continent. We now have more leisure for the cultivation of the gentler and finer arts. This great, busy, avaricious America is now eager to know the best there is in life. There has come the feeling that some knowledge of the great painters and their product is as necessary an element in the culture of even the half-educated as is an acquaintance with the life and work of Shakspere and Tennyson, Hawthorne and Poe.

EDWIN WATTS CHUBB.

Athens, Ohio.

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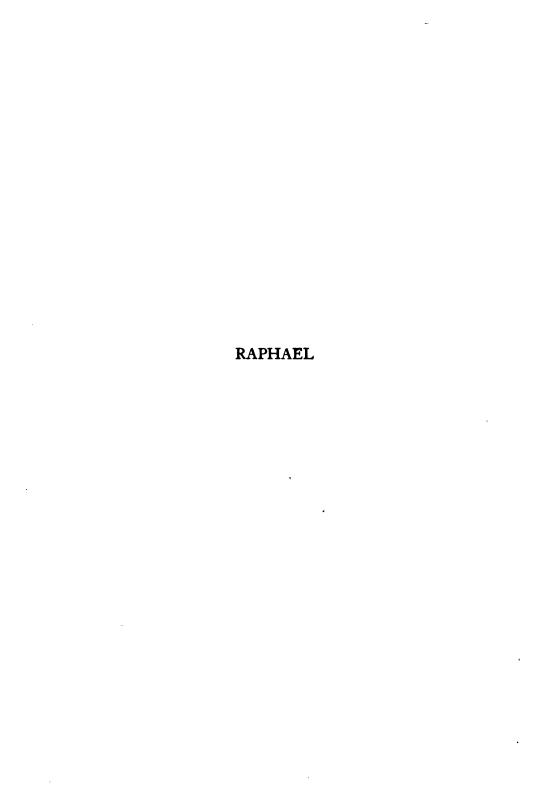
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I remember when in my younger days I had heard of the wonders of Italian painting, I fancied the great pictures would be great strangers; some surprising combination of color and form; a foreign wonder, barbaric pearl and gold, like spontoons and standards of the militia, which play such pranks in the eyes and imaginations of schoolboys. I was to see and acquire I knew not what. When I came at last to Rome, and saw with eyes the pictures, I found that genius left to novices the gay and fantastic and ostentatious, and itself pierced directly to the simple and true. . . All great actions have been simple, and all great pictures are.

EMERSON.

RAPHAEL

I

As we wander through the Dresden Art Gallery, one of the finest in the world, we are drawn to a room consecrated to a single picture. Other rooms may have a score, a hundred, beautiful objects of art; this room has but one. There in the hush and quiet hangs the most famous "madonna" of the most popular of the world's great masters. menting upon the mystic impressiveness of this work of the Prince of Painters Frances Willard said: "There is in Europe a single revelation of art which has power to silence the chatter even of fashion's devotees, and this is Raphael's 'Sistine Madonna.' I have been in its seraphic presence for hours at a time, but never heard a vocal comment." Yet concerning this painting Vasari has but three or four lines of comment.—" For the Black Friars of San Sisto in Piacenza, Raphael painted a picture, intended to form the altar-piece for the high altar of their church; the subject of this work is the Virgin with St. Sixtus and Santa Barbara, a truly admirable production."

"A truly admirable production" seems scant praise, and four lines seem scant space, for a picture that is now considered one of the world's greatest masterpieces, outranking in popularity all the famous madonnas of all the famous masters.

For many years this painting was considered one of Raphael's last works, belonging to the time of the "Transfiguration," though having better color than the latter. It is now believed to have been painted in 1515. "How the northern city of Piacenza," write the editors of the Blashfield and Hopkins edition of Vasari, "ever was fortunate enough to obtain such a picture from Raphael at his busiest time is a mystery. Perhaps it was an outcome of that visit to Bologna, if the visit ever took place: perhaps the Cardinal of San Sisto was mediator for the monks of Piacenza. He knew Raphael well, had been painted in the fresco of the Decretals, was one of the party in the famous papal progress to Bologna, and, if an advocate with Raphael, would have been a powerful one. The picture was upon canvas, and it has been said upon uncertain evidence that it was so painted in order that it might be used as banner on night festivals."

Somewhere I have read that Charles Wesley wrote 6,000 hymns; but from these 6,000 but one hymn has assurance of immortality, *Jesus*, *Lover of my Soul*. A greater poet than Wesley, Wordsworth, wrote, perhaps, thousands of sonnets, for he

has published over 450; and the world will forget all but two or three. La Farge burned many of his drawings, and yet left between 50,000 and 60,000, and he will be fortunate if one of his paintings be remembered four centuries hence. Genius, like Nature, is prodigal. Raphael has painted scores of madonnas, and doubtless sketched hundreds that he never painted, and out of the many stand two, the "Madonna della Sedia," symbolizing the human aspect of motherhood, and the "Sistine Madonna," symbolizing the divine mystery of motherhood and the sacred loveliness of childhood.

It is curious what tricks fate plays us. A capacity for taking infinite pains does not always spell perfection. It is seldom that a man's most laborious effort brings him the greatest rewards. lyle spends years in writing his Oliver Cromwell. but the world reads his Sartor Resartus instead, a work lightly dashed off in six months. works for popes and princes, elaborately decorates the Vatican and embellishes cathedrals, but the world looks at his "Sistine Madonna," to which Vasari devotes but four lines of comment. How many of the common lot, to which most of us belong, can recall the figures of the Camera della Segnatura? How many of us can ever forget the "Sistine Madonna"? La Farge found the Madonnas of Raphael even in the huts of Cannibal Land. But Raphael must have devoted a day to

the Camera della Segnatura for every hour he devoted to his greatest madonna.

In form the "Sistine Madonna" suggests a pyramid, made up of a number of pyramids. "The three principal figures form the upper triangle, and the body of each person repeats the figure,—that is, the head rises from the shoulder in such a way that the lines inclosing them produce a triangle. Further, in each face, the line formed by the eyes is connected by two imaginary lines meeting at the mouth."

But to those of us who are not artists the appeal is neither through the sense of proportion, although that must have its unconscious influence, nor through the coloring, for Raphael is not a supreme colorist; but the decided appeal is through the sweet innocence and beauty of the cherubs, the devotion of St. Barbara, the expectant adoration and humility of the Pope, the noble beauty of the mother, sad with an unutterable sadness, as though she were hearing the "still, sad music of humanity," and the tender wistfulness of the babe who seems to have in the innocence of childhood a premonition of the cross and crown of thorns.

II

It is generally believed that Raphael was born on April 6, 1483, for his intimate friend, Bembo, tells us, in the inscription written for Raphael's tomb, that the death occurred on April 6, 1520, the anniversary of his birth. His native town, Urbino, was relatively of far greater importance than it is today. Then it was a flourishing literary and artistic center, where poets, scholars, and artists had gathered under the progressive leadership of the Duke of Urbino, Federigo, who died the year before the birth of Raphael. His son, Guidobaldo, though not so virile and aggressive as Roderigo, assisted by his Duchess, one of the most noble and refined women of the Renascence, furthered the arts and sciences. Their palace became the most splendid in Italy, rich in books and treasures of art.

It is in such an atmosphere that Raphael was born. He is the only one of the eminent painters whose own father was a painter. Giovanni Santi was not only a painter, he was also a poet. As a poet he excelled his son, for the few sonnets of Raphael are commonplace; as a painter he would be unknown save to the antiquarian had he not had the distinction of being the father of the immortal painter. Of Magia Ciarla, the mother, we know that her two children before Raphael died in early childhood. Possibly this is why when little Raphael came she nursed him herself, instead of following the common custom of sending him away to the care of a wet-nurse.

No painter has ever had a sunnier career than Raphael, the darling of fortune. And yet his early

days were in the shadows. When he was eight years old he lost his mother; three years later, the father, who seven months after the death of Magia had given Raphael a step-mother, passed away. These must have been years of sad experience to the sensitive soul of this interpreter of the soul of beauty. Perhaps the latter years of prosperity were given to compensate for the sad experiences of the early days. Or perhaps the angelic Raphael had so much of the joy of life, was such an irrepressible optimist, that even the sad experiences of his childhood could not depress or deject. We cannot tell, for those early years are veiled in obscurity. All we know is that in 1499 he was in Urbino, joining in a settlement between his stepmother and his uncle, and that a year later at another business transaction he was absent.

In the London National Gallery is a picture called "The Dream of a Knight." It is a small picture representing a sleeping knight; to his right stands a demure maiden with a book in one hand and a sword in another; to his left stands a maiden equally demure, at least so she seems to me, offering a flower. The former represents the stern call to duty, the latter, the call to the delights of luxurious ease and pleasure. The figures are graceful, the background is an Umbrian landscape with hills and castles in the distance. The picture is in a wonderful state of preservation, and is remarkable because Raphael likely painted it when he was but seventeen years old. It is doubtful whether a boy of seventeen ever painted a better picture.

Belonging to the same time as the "Dream of the Knight," though the highest authorities place them three or four years later, are the two pictures in the Louvre, "St. George and the Dragon," and "St. Michael and the Dragon." To my mind they have a vigor and grace that stamp them as wonderful pictures for a youth.

The earliest of his numerous madonnas, for Raphael is preëminently the painter of madonnas, is the "Conestabile della Staffa," now in the Hermitage. The Berlin Gallery contains three of the earliest madonnas. They are usually attributed to the year 1502.

It is likely that about 1500 Raphael entered the studio of Perugino in Perugia. Perugino, though lacking in inventiveness, was one of the leading painters of his time, and Perugia, beautifully located seventeen hundred feet above the sea, commanded a prospect such as would inspire a Wordsworth to cry out in admiration,—

"Earth has not anything to show more fair: Dull would he be of soul who could pass by A sight so touching in its majesty."

Raphael was not dull of soul, and it is easy to imagine the refining influence that the natural beauty

of the scenery about Perugia exerted upon the eager adolescent. Perugino was also a fortunate influence; in his studio there were peace and orderliness and competent instruction. But before many months Raphael had absorbed all that Perugino had to offer. He went to Florence, where he saw the work of Leonardo and Michelangelo. Without becoming a mere imitator, Raphael had the happy faculty of quickly assimilating what each of these wonderful artists had to give. It was about this time that he painted the "Madonna di Sant' Antonio," now in the Pierpont Morgan collection in New York. This picture was purchased by Mr. Morgan for \$500,000. It was painted originally for the nuns of St. Anthony of Padua at Perugia.

While in Florence, Raphael painted a number of his famous madonnas. Raphael was not the painter of sorrow, of gigantic conflict, of the deep struggles that engulf man in despair, of the sins that madden and kill; he is the painter of the grace and beauty that elevate, of the joys of motherhood, the innocence of childhood. The Virgin and the holy Child appealed to his temperament. It is in these forms that men "see realized their vision of the mother whom they adore, of the wife who shall be the mother of their children, of the children that they wish to have. All that is pure and holy and of good report in woman, all that is sweet and bright in childhood, is there clothed in forms of

perfect loveliness. . . . Perhaps the first of these immortal works was the 'Madonna del Gran Duca,' so called because of the extreme love which the Grand Duke Ferdinand III of Tuscany felt for it, making it the inseparable companion of his journeys. Of all visions of woman's purity this is without doubt the purest. As she stands there holding the Divine Child on her arm, her great eyes modestly cast down, she is without a rival in the immaculate whiteness of her soul."

To this time, about 1505, belongs the "Little Cowper Madonna," so called because the smaller of two madonnas formerly owned by Lord Cowper. It was purchased in 1913 by P. A. B. Widener of Philadelphia for a sum said to exceed \$700,000, the highest amount ever paid for a picture brought to this country. In this brief sketch we cannot even name the Madonnas painted before he went to Rome. The eminent authority, M. Müntz, thinks that before he was twenty-five Raphael had painted at least sixty pictures. Among the most important of the early Madonnas are the "Madonnas of the Goldfinch," the "Madonna of the Meadow," and the "La Belle Jardinière," now respectively in Florence, Vienna, and Paris.

The "Madonna di Foligno" belongs to his Roman period, appearing in 1512 while he worked on his frescoes. It was originally painted for the

^{*} Rose, The World's Leading Painters.

papal chamberlain, Sigismond Conti. After adorning the church of Ara Coeli for fifty years it was taken to Foligno. It was afterwards taken to Paris by Napoleon; then finally placed in the Vatican where it now rests. It is larger than the "Sistine Madonna," with seven personages and a host of cherubic faces surrounding the Mother and Child, who are in the clouds. In the middle of the lower picture stands a boy-angel, of whom Vasari said that it was impossible to imagine a more beautiful or graceful child. The face of the Virgin is pensively beautiful, and the Holy Child is entrancingly graceful. In the background, on the heights above the Tiber, are the towers of Foligno.

While on the subject of Raphael's madonnas, mention must be made of the exquisite "Madonna della Sedia," painted about the same time as the "Sistine Madonna." It is now one of the chief treasures of the Pitti Palace, Florence. The picture is small, having a diameter of seventy-one centi-Beautiful as are the photographic reprometers. ductions, they can give no idea of the wonderful purity and harmony of the coloring. It is a perfect picture of the calm content and joy of motherhood and the confiding love of childhood. almost supernatural seriousness of the mother and the mystic dreaminess of the babe of the "Sistine Madonna" are not so evident, but as the representation of the deepest love of a mother for her child



MADONNA DELLA SEDIA Raphael

•

the picture is perfect and "goes straight to every heart."

Raphael reached the full tide of his prosperity only after he was summoned to Rome in 1508, there to become the favorite of two popes, Julius II and his successor, Leo X. So busy was he that he seldom did more than the drawing of the cartoons for the paintings, entrusting the coloring largely to the direction of his leading pupil, Giulio Romano. Raphael's great work in frescoes was the decoration of some of the rooms of the Vatican (the Stanze), and of a long gallery called the Loggia. On the walls of one of the rooms of the Vatican, the Camera della Segnatura, are the "Disputa," the "School of Athens," "Parnassus," and "Jurispru-The Loggia consists of thirteen small domes, each decorated with four pictures illustrating some incident from the Scriptures. The series is now known as "Raphael's Bible."

In addition to this work, he found time to paint portraits and madonnas, and began the "Transfiguration." He was also, after the death of his devoted friend Bramante, architect of St. Peter's and inspector of the antiquities and monuments of Rome. Here was work enough for a giant in strength, and any one familiar with the almost feminine face of Raphael can see that the painter must have been a man of delicate constitution. Under the strain of excessive labor he became a ready sub-

ject for the pestilential Roman fevers that lie in wait for over-taxed natures. Then, too, according to the vicious custom of the time, a custom that about three centuries later possibly shortened the lives of Byron and Washington, the physicians bled their patient until there was but little of vitality to withstand the disease. He was buried in the Pantheon, amid the lamentations of Pope and prince, of the countless friends who loved him, and of the many who without knowing him had learned to take their pride and joy in his achievements.

Ш

Raphael's personality was so charming that he overcame all opposition wherever he went. His friends were from all classes, from pope and prince to the lowliest. There was no jealousy to taint the serenity of his soul. He thanked God that he lived in the same days as Michelangelo. Among his friends were Bramante, the greatest architect of his time, Count Baldassare Castiglione, the most accomplished gentleman of his age, Cardinal Bibbiena, cunning diplomat and refined scholar, Cardinal Bembo, a noble Venetian, Agostini Chigi, the wealthiest man of his time—these were but a few of the warm friends who gladly helped to further the fortunes of the gifted Raphael.

Vasari bears witness to the charm of Raphael's personality in these words: "All confessed the in-

fluence of his sweet and gracious nature, which was so replete with excellence, and so perfect in all the charities, that not only was he honored by men, but even by the very animals, who would constantly follow his steps, and always loved him:" We are fortunate in having a letter from Raphael to his friend Castiglione, an Italian Count of whom Raphael has painted a celebrated portrait. This letter does not refer to the portrait but to other matters. Signor Venturi thinks the letter was written by a literary friend of Raphael's, but the sentiment and spirit reflect the sentiment and spirit of Raphael.

"To Count Baldassar Castiglione:

"Signor Count: I have made several designs for the subject designed by your lordship. They satisfy all who see them, if they are not flatterers; but they do not satisfy my own wish, because I fear they will not satisfy yours. I send them to you, that your lordship may choose one of them, if any one seems worthy to you. Our Lord (the Pope) in doing me the honor, has placed a heavy weight upon my shoulders. It is the superintendence of the building of St. Peter's. I hope indeed that I shall not fall under this burden, the more that the model which I have made pleases his lordship and is praised by many men of notable capacity. But I look higher still. I wish to rediscover the beauty

of antique buildings, but do not know if my flight will be that of Icarus. Vitruvius gives me great help, but not as much as I could wish. As for the Galatea, I should hold myself to be a great master if there were in it half the good things your lord-ship writes of. But I can see in your expressions the love you bear me: as to painting a beautiful woman, I ought in order to do that to see many beauties and to have you at my side to help to choose. But since good judgment and beautiful women are scarce, I work from a certain mental ideal which I have. Whether this ideal have in it anything excellent I know not; at least I struggle hard to achieve excellence. Your lordship may command my service."

After reading this letter, so modest, civil, and urbane, it is easy to believe that even the very animals loved Raphael.

IV

It is but fair to add that Raphael is not held in such high estimation as he was a generation ago. As Mr. Kenyon Cox has put it: "There is no more striking instance of the vicissitudes of critical opinion than the sudden fall of Raphael from his conceded rank as the 'prince of painters.' Up to the middle of the nineteenth century his right to

that title was so uncontested that it alone was a sufficient identification of him — only one man could possibly be meant. That he should ever need defending, or re-explaining, to a generation grown cold to him, would have seemed incredible. Then came the rediscovery of an earlier art that seemed more frank and simple than his; still later the discovery of Rembrandt and Velasquez — the romanticist and the naturalist — and Raphael, as a living influence, almost ceased to exist." And another modern critic, Mr. Berenson, places Raphael with the mediocrities of the Umbrian school, although acknowledging that Raphael was the greatest master of composition that Europe has produced.

This, it must be remembered, is the criticism of art critics, specialists who have their fads and prejudices. The popular fancy will continue to see in Raphael the "prince of painters." Popular judgment is in the long run as trustworthy as that of the expert critic. The painter of the "Mass of Bolsena," the "School of Athens," the "Disputa," the "Parnassus," the "Madonna of the Chair," the "Transfiguration," and the "Sistine Madonna," having survived the vagaries of four centuries of praise and blame, seems sure of an abiding place among the few Immortals who have enriched the world with the priceless products of their imagination. So long as warmth and beauty appeal more

strongly to the heart of man than do technique and precision, so long shall the common people look upon Raphael as the "prince of painters."

"The comparison of Raphael," writes an art critic, "with Michelangelo is inevitable, but not very profitable; each sat upon the mountain-top, one in clouds, the other in sunshine; for Buonarroti's terribilità we have Raphael's serenity; in either quality there is power; Michelangelo's was the most overwhelming personality in the history of modern art, a whole generation struggled in its shadow and could not escape its fascination. Raphael used the personalities of all the greatest artists of his time and made some of their best his own. His working life was only a little more than a quarter as long as the span of nearly seventy years of labor allotted to his great rival Michelangelo. Raphael is the typically youthful artist, and therein is the very archetype of the Renaissance, of the New Birth, of the epoch when the world was young again, and men turned east and west, upward and onward, to the arts with Leonardo, to the seas with Columbus, to the heavens with Copernicus, in dauntless conviction that their question if earnestly asked should assuredly find an answer somewhere in the great economy of nature."

The other evening I heard a popular lecturer feed the vanity of his twentieth-century audience by declaring that the nineteenth century was the most

wonderful century in the history of the world, made especially wonderful by the extended application of steam and electricity to the manifold machinery invented by ingenious man. In fact, so marvellous was that century that it alone outshone the combined brilliancy of all the preceding centuries. seems to appeal to the popular fancy. We feel great, because we belong to a great age, even though we individually have done nothing to make the age great. And the modern age is great because we can print more newspapers in an hour than Franklin could have printed in a month with his old hand press; because we can light our houses with electricity, run our vehicles with gasoline motors, and telegraph the gossip of London to the gossipers of New York.

No one will dispute that the last hundred years have been productive of wonderful inventions. But it is well to remember that the man, or was it a child or woman, who domesticated the first wild animal was a greater benefactor than the inventor of the rapid firing gun; that the makers of the alphabet can compare well as benefactors with the inventors of a linotype machine; that the inventor of the mariner's compass is entitled to the world's homage as well as the inventor of the steam engine.

The age in which Raphael lived is an age of great men. It is the age in which the Medici were the patrons of art at Florence; of the older Italian paint-

ers of his day there were Leonardo da Vinci, Giorgione, and Titian; of his compeers there was the gigantic genius - Michelangelo; and Bramante, the architect of St. Peter's, and Ariosto, the poet, and Christopher Columbus, the discoverer. All these belonged to Italy. In Portugal lived Vasco da Gama, the discoverer; in England, Sebastian Cabot; in Germany, we find Copernicus, Holbein, Albert Dürer, and Martin Luther: while in France lived the brilliant satirist.— Rabelais. What a list of names! These men lived four hundred years ago. In four hundred years hence how many names of che nineteenth century will be as famous and worthy of fame as the names of Columbus, Luther, Leonardo, Michelangelo, and Raphael?

MILLET

Yes, art is the great and universal refreshment. For Art is never dogmatic; holds no brief for itself; you may take it or you may leave it. It does not force itself rudely where it is not wanted. It is reverent to all tempers, to all points of view. But it is willful—the very wind in the comings and going of its influence, an uncapturable fugitive, visiting our hearts at vagrant, sweet moments; since even before the greatest works of art we often stand without being able quite to lose ourselves! That restful oblivion comes, we never quite know when—and it is gone! But when it comes, it is a spirit hovering with cool wings, blessing us, from the least to the greatest, according to our powers, a spirit deathless and varied as human life itself.

GALSWORTHY in The Atlantic.



THE GLEANERS Millet

MILLET

Ι

In 1849 a Norman peasant with his wife and three children drove to a footpath leading to the little hamlet of Barbizon. They were near the great and beautiful Forest of Fontainebleau, but at this moment they had little interest in the magnificent forest, for it was raining and they had to abandon the highway and their vehicle to enter the pathway that led to the hamlet. The man was well built and with a good and notable head; his shoulders were the strong shoulders of a man of thirty-five, so he placed thereon his two little girls, while his wife followed with an infant in her arms; by her side walked a servant carrying a basket of provisions. the little party trudged through the rain, the mother raising her skirt to protect the little one from the rain.

A peasant woman thought a band of strolling players was arriving.

The sturdy father of the family was Millet, the man destined to immortalize the little village of Barbizon. He had come down from Paris the day before with his friend Jacque to find a quiet little

hamlet on the edge of the forest. Jacque had learned of this ideal spot but had forgotten the name, except that it ended in "zon." They had found it at last, and there Millet intended to remain "for a time"; he remained for twenty-seven years, that is, to the end of his life. Some one has said that you could be born in Barbizon, but could not be buried there, for Barbizon was hardly even a village. There was neither church nor churchyard in the hamlet. The neighboring village of Chailly provided shops, postoffice, and churchyard for Barbizon.

Millet had studied at Cherbourg, and in 1837 had gone to Paris where he reveled in the splendors of the Louvre, and later studied in the studio of Paul Delaroche. Then he returned to Cherbourg where he married his first wife, who in two years passed away. Then to Paris again, and now to the country which he adored. He was a peasant of the peasants, a man to whom the life of the country was meat and drink, his breath and spirit. Paris with its glitter and conventions had wearied him. "When I get to the ground," he had said, "I shall be free."

Although Millet was a peasant of the peasants, he was of the type to which Carlyle, and Burns, and Lincoln belong. He was a peasant who knew his Vergil and his Milton, and above all his Bible. His face reminds one of the leading actors of the Passion Play at Oberammergau. There is in it all the tenderness and strength, the sadness and ideality, the re-

finement and purity that we associate with the personality of that disciple whom the Galilean Master loved.

Wherever you find a great man you find, if you look far enough, a strong woman. In the case of Millet we find a grandmother of some force. Louise Jumelin, widow of Nicolas Millet, living with the family of her son. She is described as "consumed by religious fire, severe for herself, gentle and charitable toward others, passing her life in good works, and with the ideal of sainthood constantly before her eyes." "Her religion," says Millet, "blended itself with a love of nature." When Millet, in the days of his early career, seemed to be in danger of striving after popular effect, as evidenced in his Havre exhibition of the "Temptation of St. Jerome," his wise grandmother wrote to him -"Follow the example of that man of your own profession who used to say: 'I paint for eternity.' For no cause whatever, permit yourself to do evil works or to lose sight of the presence of God." Keeping in mind such training, we are not surprised to read Millet's ambition as expressed in 1867,—"I continue to desire only this, to live from my work and to bring up my children fittingly; then to express the most possible of my impressions; also, and at the same time, to have the sympathies of those I love well. Let all this be granted me and I shall regard myself as having the good portion."

To live from the work one loves, to bring up children fittingly, to be loved by those we love,—this was the prayer of this peasant painter who must have been also a very wise man, if a man is to be judged by the prayers he makes. Millet's prayer was answered. Why then should we pity this man because his recognition came late, or because his early days were days of poverty, or because he suffered much from violent headaches? The great thing to remember is that his life was as simple and beautiful as any of his pictures. Before his death he knew that his work was appreciated, and for more than twoscore years he was doing the work he loved for those who loved him. Therefore we can all agree with Robert Louis Stevenson's thought. "To pity Millet is a piece of arrogance."

II

Among modern painters few are better known to Americans than Millet. Aside from the merit of the artist and his choice of subjects which make a wide appeal because of their union of rugged realism with idyllic beauty, this may be due, first, to, the notoriety attending the sale of "The Angelus" at an auction sale in 1889, and second, to the two poems by Edwin Markham, the one on "The Man with the Hoe," and the other on "The Sower."

"The Angelus" is almost as familiar as Raphael's

"Sistine Madonna." The original is an oil painting measuring 25 x 21 inches, its size illustrating, like Raphael's "Madonna of the Chair," that art is not a matter of acres of canvas and barrels of paint. In February, 1858, the first drawing for the painting was sold. In the Salon of a year later the painting itself was exhibited. The patron for whom it had been painted declined to accept it, so a Belgian artist bought it and sold it to the Belgian minister. original price was 2000 francs. It passed through various hands until in 1873 we find Mr. J. W. Wilson giving 50,000 francs for it; and then at the Wilson sale in 1881 it brought £6400, showing that art like wine improves with age, for an easy arithmetical computation will show that £6400 is greater than 2000 francs. In eight years more the same picture was sold for 553,000 francs to M. Proust, who represented the French government, at an auction sale of the Secretan collection, but as the French government refused to ratify the sale the picture was acquired by a citizen of the United States. However, the customs duty was so great (\$35,000) that the picture remained only six months (the duty being waived during that time), and then, after being placed on exhibition at many places in this country, was sent back to France, where M. Chauchard purchased it for £32,000.

Of course, such an enormous sum for a little

picture attracted much attention, for even a Philistine can appreciate art when it sells for over \$150,000.

The two poems by Markham, already mentioned, aroused much controversy, and did much to stimulate interest in the two pictures that inspired the poems. Markham saw in "The Man with the Hoe" and "The Sower" a protest against the oppression of the aristocracy, a defiance hurled in the face of kings, a revolt against the present order of society. In The Sower we read,—

He is the stone rejected, yet the stone Whereon is built metropolis and throne, Out of his toil come all their pompous shows, Their purple luxury and plush repose!

He hurls the bread of nations from his hand; And in the passion of that gesture flings His fierce resentment in the face of kings.

There is a sonorous dignity and passionate protest in Markham's poems that make them worthy of the popularity they have enjoyed; but it is well to know what Markham sees in the picture is not what Millet saw. When "The Man with the Hoe" was first exhibited Millet was accused of socialism, of trying to stir the peasants into an insurrection. To his friend Sensier he wrote in defense,—"I see very clearly the aureole encircling

the head of the daisy, and the sun which glows beyond, far, far over the countryside, its glory in the skies; I see, not less clearly, the smoking ploughhorses in the plain, and in a rocky corner a man bent with labor, who groans as he works, or who for an instant tries to straighten himself to catch his breath. The drama is enveloped in splendor. This is not of my creation; the expression, 'the cry of the earth,' was invented long ago." From this one can readily see that Millet did not think of his toiler as described by Markham:

> Bowed by the weight of centuries he leans Upon his hoe and gazes on the ground, The emptiness of ages in his face, And on his back the burden of the world.

When in 1850 "The Sower," now in the Metropolitan Art Museum, was first exhibited in the Salon, Theophile Gautier wrote,—"The sower advances with rhythmic step, casting the seed into the furrowed land; sombre rags cover him; a formless hat is drawn down over his brow; he is gaunt, cadaverous, and thin under his livery of misery; and yet life is contained in his large hand, as with a superb gesture he who has nothing scatters broadcast over the earth the bread of the future." Another critic at this time saw in "The Sower" a Communist flinging handfuls of shot against the sky.

All this might lead one easily to believe that

Millet intended that these pictures should be a protest against the lot of the peasant. On this point, however, it is interesting to read the testimony of his younger brother,—" Because he chose his subjects among the workers, and showed them in their natural ways and work, political motives have sometimes been attributed to him. It has been said that he wished to show the miseries of the poor and excite hatred toward the rich. For this reason the government authorities for a long time suspected him, and set him aside. But I can attest that such an idea never entered his head, and that politics never once suggested to him the subject of a picture or its composition. He did not even read the political newspapers, and knew nothing of the intriguing movements of the day, which every one else was discussing.

"He chose the subjects of his pictures from among the familiar objects of the life in which he had been brought up, and from the work that he himself had performed; not that he wished to delineate misery, but that he sympathized with the laborious peasant life. To him it seemed the most natural condition of man, and he knew by experience that the workers of the fields do not continually grumble at their occupation; that even in many instances they enjoy it, and know how to mingle amusement with their labor. His subjects always impress one with his great love for humanity, and are not presented



THE MAN WITH THE HOE Millet

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to excite pity on the part of the beholder. If he represents a mother showing her daughter how to sew or knit, it is always with the tenderness and affection of a mother. Or he represents a new-born lamb, which the shepherdess carries in her apron, the legs of the newly-born being still too weak to walk to the sheepfold. The ewe follows her lamb, never taking her eyes from it, and has the anxious air of a mother trembling with love and tenderness for the safety of her little one. Thus he shows us the sentiment of love, as it exists in nature, even among the animals.

"He admired order and care in the mother of a family. He has never painted a peasant with clothes torn. He sometimes painted one with patched clothes; but surely this spoke of order in the home. . . . His peasant is always honest and respectable in his rustic but orderly ways, and never has a wicked or trivial air."

Millet himself wrote in 1867,—"I repel with all my strength the democratic side, as it is understood in the language of the clubs, that they have wished to attribute to me. My sole desire has been to direct thought to the man consecrated to earning his livelihood in the sweat of his brow. . . . I have never had the idea of making any plea whatsoever, Je suis paysan paysan."

No great artist is primarily an advocate of any theory or doctrine. Hamlet is a masterpiece be-

cause the reader can read into the play whatever he brings to the reading. Millet's pictures are impressive for a similar reason. He painted the truth as he saw it. He was a dreamer whose dreams were based on reality. Beyond the real he saw the infinite, which to him also was real, though elusive. "Ah! I would wish," he exclaims, "I could make those who look at what I do feel the terrors and the splendors of the night. One ought to be able to make the songs, the silences, the murmurs of the air heard. One must perceive infinity." And again he cries out,—"Oh, spaces which made me dream so when I was a child, will it never be permitted me to make you even suspected?"

III

During the winter of 1855-56 Mr. Wheelwright, an American art student, lived in Barbizon to be near Millet and receive advice, for the Master refused to take students into his atelier, saying he could not work if another were with him. After trying to deter the young American by telling him if he wanted to study the human figure he should go to Paris where he could have models, he played his last card by saying that even if he went to the student's room but occasionally he would have to charge a large sum. This large sum, however, was but a hundred francs. When the American

jumped at the offer, Millet's face seemed to fall in disappointment.

To Mr. Wheelwright we are indebted for an intimate picture of the simple Barbizon home as it appeared to him in 1855,—"There was much in Millet himself suggestive of the Bible and of the old patriarchs, especially to those who saw him in the privacy of his own home: at least it so appeared to me on the occasion of my first introduction to his family. One day, when I had been about a month at Barbizon, 'Si vous voulez venir vous chauffer avec nous quelquefois le soir, cela nous fera plaisir; si toutefois cela vous est agréable.' I was very glad to accept the invitation, and did not allow many days to elapse before presenting myself, one evening, at Millet's house. I was ushered into a rather large but low room, very plainly furnished, where I found the family sitting around a large table in front of an open wood fire. There was, so far as I remember, no pictures of any kind upon the wall, nor any attempt at ornament; none of the knickknacks and objects of virtu which most artists think it so essential to gather around them. There was a lamp on the table, at which Millet was reading when I entered, while his brother Pierre was engaged in drawing. Opposite sat Madame Millet with her sewing, and beside her with her knitting in her hand, the maid of all work who had answered

my knock. The oldest daughter, a girl of about ten, was also present, but not long after my arrival, at a sign from her mother, she slipped quietly into a corner behind my chair, and when, attracted by a slight rustling sound, I involuntarily turned my head, I saw that she had climbed upon a bed, whose presence in a corner I had not before noticed. I had a momentary vision of a slim figure in a long white garment which suddenly collapsed and disappeared under the coverlid, beneath which, I think, one or more of the other children were already asleep. . . .

"On this, my first visit, Madame Millet took but little part in the conversation; but at other times I found her by no means indisposed to talk, especially of herself, her children, and her housekeeping. She was a farmer's-wife sort of body, brisk and active though no longer young. I was told she was an excellent woman and a good wife to Millet. I think she regarded him as a being of superior order to herself, as indeed in many respects he was, while I shall never forget the tenderness of the tone with which I have heard him address her as 'ma vieille,' nor the affectionate gesture with which I have seen him lay his hand upon her shoulder."

IV

One Sunday when Millet had gone to Paris on an errand relating to some difficulties he had in learning the art of etching, four or five gentlemen came into Millet's atelier where they found Mr. Wheelwright and Pierre, the brother of the artist. One of these was Diaz, the distinguished painter. They were much disappointed on finding that their friend Millet was absent, but turning to Pierre, urged him to show all the pictures in the atelier. They said this would be a fine opportunity to see what their friend was doing, for if Millet were there he would, as usual, put them off by showing two or three pictures only, saying that the others were not worth showing.

"It was in vain," writes Mr. Wheelwright, "that Pierre protested; they would take the responsibility, they said, and, besides, everything should be properly replaced, and Millet need never know. Then with much noise and laughter and cries of admiration, they seized and placed one by one on an easel, in the best light, every canvas they could lay their hands on.

"At last was brought out from its hiding-place a picture representing the interior of a peasant's cottage. A young mother was seated, knitting or sewing, while with one foot she rocked the cradle in which lay a child asleep. To screen the infant from the light which streamed in from an open window behind it, a blanket had been folded around the head of the cradle, through which the light came tempered and diffused as by a ground-glass shade.

The strongly illuminated and semi-transparent blanket formed a sort of nimbus around the child's head; his little figure, from which, in his sleep, he had tossed most of its covering, lay in shadow, but a shadow lit up by tenderly transmitted or softly reflected lights. Anything more exquisitely beautiful than this sleeping child has rarely, I believe, been painted. Through the open window the eye looked out into a garden where a man with his back turned appeared to be at work. The whole scene gave the impression of a hot summer's day; but you could almost see the trembling motion of the heated air outside, you could almost smell the languid scent of flowers, you could almost hear the droning of the bees, and you could positively feel the absolute quiet and repose, the solemn silence, that pervaded the picture. All those at least felt it who saw the picture on that Sunday morning. A sudden hush fell upon the noisy and merry party. They sat or stood before the easel without speaking, almost without breathing. The silence that was in some way painted into the canvas seemed to distill from it into the surrounding air. At last Diaz said in a low voice, husky with emotion, 'Eh bien! cà, c'est biblique.' The others gave their assent by signs or in whispers,—not another word was spoken.

"I do not know what Millet called this picture. He usually gave very simple titles to his works,

leaving it for those who might appreciate them to find out a deeper meaning than the name implied. One of his friends christened it 'Le Bonheur Domestique,' and Millet did not disapprove. It is not impossible that in painting it Millet was thinking of that holy child who long ago, in Judea, was born of a peasant mother and slept in a peasant's The extraordinary effects of light, though explained by perfectly natural causes, gave some color to the supposition that the picture may have been intended to have a biblical character in a more literal sense than occurred to me, and perhaps to the others, at the time. The picture was, however, chiefly suggestive to me of that 'Sabbath stillness' so dear to the descendants of the Puritans; and I could not avoid connecting it in my mind with a conversation I had lately had with Millet. He had been speaking of Milton and his accurate and beautiful descriptions of natural objects; he had especially been impressed with a passage of the Paradise Lost, in which, he said, the poet represents the silence as listening. He had forgotten the connection, and remembered only the words, 'le silence écoute.' 'What a silence that must be,' he added, 'a silence that hushed itself to listen! a silence that is more silent than silence itself!' I felt sure Millet had had the image in his mind when he was painting that picture. On looking for the passage afterward, on my return to America, I was sur-

prised that I could not find it. At last it occurred to me that Millet had of course read it in a translation; and in the French version of *Paradise Lost* by J. Delille, I finally discovered it. It occurs in the well-known description of the approach of night, in the Fourth Book, beginning,—

Now came still evening on, and twilight gray Had in her sober livery all things clad, etc.

In the verse describing the song of the nightingale there is in the French translation this line,—

Il chante, l'air répond, et le silence écoute.

The act of listening is not mentioned in the original; though implied in the words, 'Silence was pleased.'"

Another illustration of the power of this painter to reach the inner deeps of feeling is given by the American painter, Will H. Low, in an article on Millet. It is doubly interesting because the story relates to Robert Louis Stevenson. Mr. Low, at the time, is in Barbizon studying the art of the Master. "One more visit stands out prominently in my memory. It came about in this wise. In the summer of 1874 the two 'Stevensons,' as they were known, the cousins Robert Louis and Robert Allan Mowbray Stevenson (the author of the recent Life of Velasquez, and the well-known writer on art), were in Barbizon. It fell that the cousins, in

pessimistic vein, were decrying modern art — the great men were all dead; we should never see their like again; in short, the mood in which we all fall at times was dominant. As in duty bound, I argued the cause of the present and future, and as a clinching argument told them that I had it in my power to convince them that at least one of the greatest painters of all time was still busy in the practice of his art. Millet was not much more than a name to my friends, and I am certain that that day when we talked over our coffee in the garden of Siron's inn, they had seen little or none of his work. ventured across the road, knocked at the little green door, and asked permission to bring my friends. which was accorded for the same afternoon. half an hour, therefore, I was witness of an object lesson of which the teacher was serenely unconscious. Of my complete triumph when we left there was no doubt, although one of my friends rather begged the question by insisting that I had taken an unfair advantage; and that, as he expressed it. 'It was not in the game, in an ordinary discussion, between gentlemen, concerning minor poets, to drag in Shakespeare in that manner."

V

The critics, of course, have found flaws in the art of Millet. Mr. Bigot, agreeing with Fromentin, laments Millet's lack of technique, the heaviness of

his hand, and the crudeness of his workmanship. He observes that his garments are painted so heavily that they seemingly might crush those that wear them. Though skillful in harmony, he is deficient as a colorist. But he praises his power of rendering air, and grants that all his personages, houses, and trees "are bathed in air and enveloped in infinite space." And another critic, Holman Hunt, although admiring Millet's human sympathy and poetic purpose, feels that Millet's defect of grace marred the perfection of many of his designs.

These strictures are doubtless valid and simply prove that Millet along with the common lot of mortal man fell short of perfection, or at least that He was Millet. he was individual. Had he had the easy grace of a Raphael, the sweeping imagination of a Rubens, the overmastering intellect of an Angelo, he would not have been Millet. He had his own theory of art, although he was too much of an artist to paint to prove a theory. does not lie in the face," he once said; "it lies in the harmony between man and his industry. . . . The beautiful is that which is in keeping." And at another time he asked, "Which is the more beautiful, a stately tree, isolated in the middle of a field, or a knotted, twisted, stunted tree gnawed by the wind and deformed by the stroke of the tempest? Neither the one nor the other: all depends on the work in which that tree is to take its place, and the

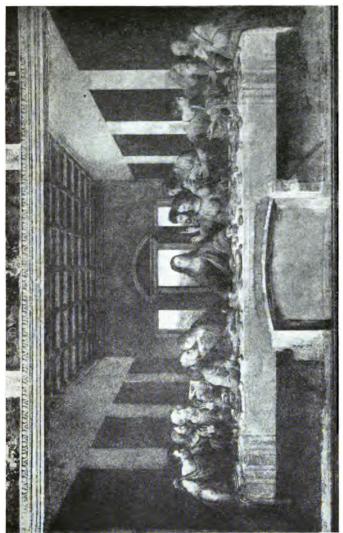
effect which its presence there produces." So, too, is it with artists of high rank; each has his own merits; each transcends the narrow restrictions of formulas constructed by pedantic criticism, each is the revealer of an undiscovered world of beauty. To Millet belongs the honor of discovering the beauty and pathos of the life of the French peasant.



LEONARDO

Leonardo is the most thoughtful of all painters, unless it be Albrecht Dürer. The mind and its infinite suggestions are his realm. With Raphael it is beauty and harmony; with Michelangelo it is passion and strength; with him it is thought and feeling—thought so deep that voice can never utter it, feelings so sensitively delicate, so preternaturally refined, that they elude our grasp; and he is full of all sorts of curious questionings, of intricate caprices mingled with divine conceptions. No mind of power so versatile and penetrating was ever devoted to artistic effort.

G. B. Rose in Renaissance Masters.



THE LAST SUPPER (IN ITS PRESENT CONDITION)
Leonardo

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LEONARDO DA VINCI

Ι

On the northern wall of the Refectory, or diningroom, of the Convent Santa Maria delle Grazie in Milan is the "Last Supper" of Leonardo da Vinci. Although the glory of the original coloring has departed and the surface of the wall is scarred and cracked, the painting is justly regarded as one of the world's great masterpieces. There are many critics who do not hesitate to declare that as regards composition at least it is the supreme masterpiece in the whole field of pictorial art.

As the wall was built of stone containing nitre, readily absorbing dampness, and as in his zeal for producing splendid effects in coloring the painter experimented in tempera, a medium lacking in durability, the painting had already suffered deterioration when Vasari in 1566 called it a "tarnished patch of colors." Then there were external forces at work. The monks themselves committed vandalism by cutting a door through the wall just below the figure of Christ. When in 1796 the Napoleonic invasion entered Milan, the French soldiers used the Refectory as a stable for their horses,

although Napoleon had given orders that the picture should not be injured. Unfortunately the General in command did not obey the instructions very minutely, for the French soldiers occasionally amused themselves by pelting the heads of the Apostles with clods of clay. In 1800 a flood covered the floor of the Refectory to a depth of two feet, and when the waters subsided, the painting was covered with a thick mould. The picture has also suffered from the injudicious restorers who from 1726 to 1870 imposed their own conceptions of coloring upon Leonardo's masterpiece. Since then the main effort has been to remove all traces of the work of the restorers so that we can get, if only faintly, the original picture. We can get a very good conception of the original composition, if not of the harmony and coloring, from the excellent engraving of Rudolf Stang of Düsseldorf, who after thirteen years of study published an accurate engraving. Especially good also is the engraving bearing the mark of Raphael Morghen.

The original is a large picture, twenty-nine and one-half feet long, and fourteen and three-fourths feet high. The engravings have made us familiar with the famous scene. Christ with his twelve disciples is seated at a table in a plainly furnished room whose three sides, with three windows at the rear, present an illustration of Leonardo's perfect perspective. In the central position is the Savior, the

light of the middle window serving as a halo. has just announced, "One of you shall betray me." The effect of this declaration has thrown the twelve into violent agitation. The marvel is that although there is intense agitation, yet there is also the dignity of repose in each of the four groups into which the artist has arranged the picture. Christ is in the center of the picture, apart from each group, but every line in the room and every look and gesture of every man in the room leads the eyes to Christ. "In the nobility of the faces of all save Judas, in his aspect of cruel and impenitent resolve," writes a critic, "art has spoken its loftiest word. the old pictures Judas had been isolated on the other side of the table, with his back to the spectator, an improbable and inartistic arrangement. Leonardo puts him amongst the most favored disciples, between St. Peter and St. John, but he accomplishes the same result by separating him from the others by causing him to lean forward upon the table, facing his Master with implacable gaze as he clutches the money-bag and overturns the salt-cellar. . . . Three of the figures are standing, but they lean forward so gracefully that their heads scarcely rise above those of their seated companions, and they only accentuate the harmony of the lines."

The tradition is that Leonardo worked for ten years upon the painting, the monks fretting at the delay. He probably did most of the work within

two years. Bandello, an eye witness, has given us an interesting account of his method of work,—"I have often seen him come very early and watched him mount the scaffolding - because the 'Last Supper' is somewhat high above the floor — and then he would not put down the brush from sunrise till the night set in, yes, he forgot eating and drinking, and painted without ceasing. Then two, three, or four days would pass without his doing anything, and yet he spent daily one or two hours before the picture, lost in contemplation, examining, comparing, and gauging his figures. I have also seen him at midday during the greatest heat, prompted by a whim or fancy, leave the old castle where he was modelling his wonderful equestrian statue, and hasten to Santa Maria delle Grazie. There he would mount the scaffolding, take up his brush, do one or two strokes to one of the figures, and then turn his back and go away." And Vasari, who knew that genius is often most profitably employed when seemingly idle, relates that Leonardo sometimes spent half a day before his picture in apparent idle contemplation.

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This inactivity roused the indignation of the officious Prior, who belonged to the vast order of those who believe that the busier a man seems the more he accomplishes, and so he hastened to the Duke with a remonstrance against the idle painter. The Duke then felt obliged to admonish Leonardo, hinting that he did so merely to oblige the fussy Prior and hoping that Leonardo would understand that the Duke himself had no fault to find with the painter. However, Leonardo was slightly incensed and explained to the understanding Duke that there is a great difference between the work of the creative artist and that of a stonemason. The creative artist needs time for contemplation; he may he busiest when his hands are idlest. Just now he needed two heads to complete the picture, that of Christ, for which no model on earth could be found. for where was the man to be found whose countenance would express the strength, and beauty, and tenderness, and divine sorrow of the Christ: then he also needed a head for Judas, and that was hard to find also, for where was the man whose face could express the meanness of that base traitor, but he would look no further; if none came his way, he would be satisfied to take the Prior as a model for Judas. This threat silenced the querulous Prior. who quite naturally had no inclination to pass to posterity in such a fashion.

In Adolf Rosenberg's excellent monograph on Leonardo there is this comment upon the "Last Supper"—"The decisive step from a dead art, which still fettered its votaries by its traditions, into the new world of the highest artistic perfection, was only accomplished when Leonardo stood before the wall in Milan, on which his masterpiece was to be executed. When he saw that space before him, he made up his mind that his picture should, as it were, break through the wall and become an ideal expansion of the Refectory, in order to let the eyes of the monks look into the distance, into eternity, whilst they were enjoying things The architectural frame of his picture aims at expanding the real space. The great master of the laws of perspective lets the side walls incline at an obtuse angle towards the wall in the background, in which are three windows with a view of a mountain landscape of Lombardy in the soft evening light. This is the ideal background for the heroic resignation of the Savior who stands there like a rock amongst the breakers raging around him. Every one of his disciples shows his temperament, his disposition, his innermost feelings, not only in his face but also by the hands stretched out towards his Lord and Master. Leonardo has striven to study the character of every one of these men from the writings of the Apostles, the Evangelists, the Fathers of the Church, and has taken into account the most insignificant traits in order to gain a living individuality. The very movements of the hands distinguish the man ready to commit a rash and angry deed, from the gentle sufferer who is willing to follow his Master even unto death,—the man of a sanguine temperament who cannot bring himself to believe in the monstrous crime, from the

sceptic who foresaw everything, and feels a certain satisfaction in seeing his dark forebodings fulfilled. . . . Every face is a mirror reflecting the drama of the soul. Every emotion is touched, from the lovely idyl of innocence and singleness of heart; from the strongest passion to the fall into the lowest depths. . . . Many sins have been forgiven and forgotten; but the fearful guilt of Judas goes like a restless spectre of the night through the history of every nation, and no language on earth has an expression for the most wicked of all crimes, which is more annihilating than the name of Judas. one of all the masters who tried their skill in painting the 'Last Supper' has struck this sinner to the very marrow as Leonardo has done. . . . If we look at the angry Peter who had been seated near Judas, but had risen instantly, ready for the combat, pressing his hand with the knife against his side, and asking John, the beloved disciple of our Lord, whom the Master really meant,—then and then only we understand the fear which seized the trembling Judas when he saw the violent agitation of the man ready at any moment to draw the sword against any one in order to protect his master."

II

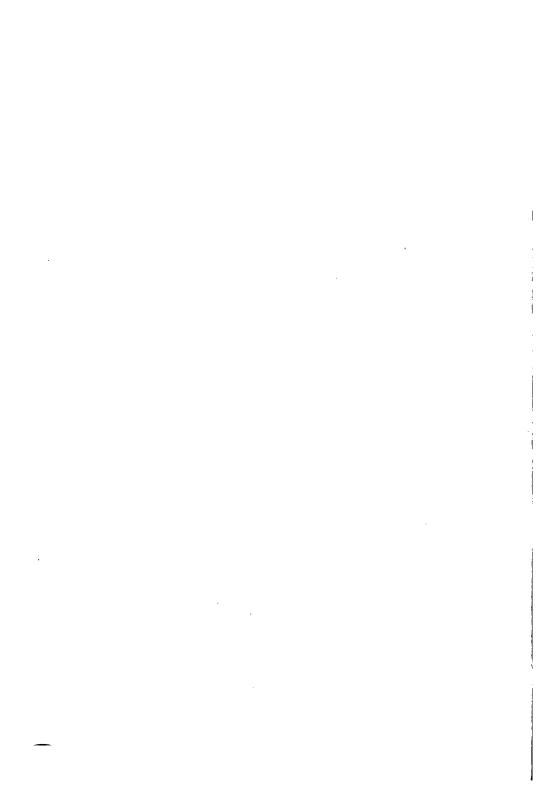
The "Mona Lisa," or "La Gioconda," is another masterpiece of Leonardo's that is known the world over. Although any one who knows anything

about pictures has known of the "Mona Lisa," part of its latter-day fame is due to the publicity caused by its theft from the Louvre, August 21, 1911. As this is the most famous portrait in existence, with an estimated value of several million dollars, its disappearance from the Salon Carré in the Louvre was the most sensational robbery of modern times. After an absence of two years it was brought to Paris from Florence, where it had been recovered through the instrumentality of the antiquary, Signor Geri.

The "Mona Lisa" is another illustration that the value of a picture does not depend on its bigness. It is but 31 x 21 inches. Originally it was painted for Ser Francesco del Giocondo, a Florentine patrician, whose third wife was Mona Lisa, a Neapolitan noblewoman. There is an unfounded tradition that Mona Lisa loved Leonardo, who in turn was fascinated by the witchery of her elusive beauty. Here was a subject congenial to the temperament of that restless seeker after truth who, instead of aiming to reproduce merely exterior beauty, endeavored to penetrate into the soul of things. an insatiable ambition to catch and fix forever the hidden and fugitive spirit of personality, he worked on this portrait for four years and then feeling its incompleteness handed it over to the husband, who, displeased with the peculiar quality of the smile, refused to accept it. However, from the very be-



MONA LISA Leonardo



ginning there were those who prized the peculiar quality of the painting. Francis I, King of France, bought it from Leonardo, paying four thousand gold écus.

This is the history of its migrations: Francis I placed it in the Cabinet Doré at Fontainebleau, in a collection which later became the nucleus of the Louvre masterpieces. Then in 1659 Louis XIV removed it to the Petite Galerie du Roy at Versailles. In 1800 Napoleon hung it in his private rooms in the Tuileries. Upon his downfall it was taken to the Louvre, from which along with other masterpieces, it was taken to Brest for concealment during the Franco-German war. Since then, with the exception of the time of its theft, it has hung in the Salon Carré of the Louvre.

For more than four hundred years, from Vasari to Walter Pater and present-day critics, the admirers of "La Gioconda" have vied with each other even to the extent of hyperbole, in praising "this miracle of workmanship." Vasari tells us "that whoever wishes to see how art can imitate nature may learn from this head." And that in this portrait by Leonardo "there is a peaceful smile more divine than human."

Although an injudicious restorer and the inevitable fading that comes with years have dimmed the original warmth and harmony of coloring, enough of its charm remains to stamp it as one of

the masterpieces of Leonardo. The hands are the most perfect ever painted. "Also the landscape of the Dolomites in the near background through which streams and rivulets are winding between weird rocky banks, still shows in its gentle gradations from the dull brown to a lighter green, and finally to a bright blue, the hand of Leonardo, his thorough knowledge of the perspective of the atmosphere and of the tints which become more and more faint in the far off distance. The most marvellous feature of the picture is however the mellowness in the treatment of the design, the chiaroscuro around the whole figure shedding a brilliancy of color over the features, blending them as it were, and thus divesting them of the plastic hardness which was till then the characteristic peculiarity of Florentine art." *

Attention is called by Mr. Edward McCurdy to "the curling auburn hair escaping at either side from the veil, and just brushing the bosom as it falls . . . and the eyes . . . gray, devoid alike of eyelash or eyebrow, heavy-lidded, languorous, yet strangely intent." And in Walter Pater's famous description we read, "It is a beauty wrought out from within upon the flesh, the deposit, little cell by cell, of strange thoughts and fantastic reveries and exquisite passions. . . . All the thoughts and experience of the world have etched and molded there, in that

^{*} Rosenberg.

which they have of power to refine and make expressive the outward form, the animalism of Greece, the lust of Rome, the reverie of the Middle Age with its spiritual ambitions and imaginative loves, the return of the Pagan world, the sins of the Borgias."

Before leaving this subject, we must add that there are good critics who consider the "Mona Lisa" in the Prado at Madrid a far finer illustration of Leonardo's genius than the one in the Louvre. It is in a far better state of preservation.

TTT

In one of the latest biographies of Leonardo, that by Dr. Jens Thiis, nearly three hundred illustrations of his work are reproduced. And yet although we have so many paintings and drawings, and sketches and documents of the incomparable painter, the master of the Renascence remains as mysterious and inscrutable as the smile of his "Mona Lisa." His most striking characteristic is his versatility. He has been called "perhaps the most richly-gifted among all the sons of men." He was the completest anatomist of his time, having dissected a hundred bodies; he was an astronomer who asserted before Copernicus that the earth and not the sun moved. Edward McCurdy has an article in the Nineteenth Century of July, 1910, to show that Leonardo as the foremost aeronaut of his time was engaged in the construction of a flying-machine; he was also a

musician, mechanic, geologist, geographer, botanist, optician, and mathematician. Besides this he was architect, sculptor, and, of course, the greatest painter before Michelangelo and Raphael.

He had a Faust-like craving to attain perfection; with Bacon he would take all knowledge to be his province. He suggests the philosophic Coleridge who planned great things but seldom completed what he had planned, with this difference — Leonardo completed much, though always feeling a baffling incompleteness. His passion was for the half-seen and half-known. In his eternal seeking after truth, he aimed to penetrate beneath the surface, to solve the riddle of the universe. He was a great painter because he was a great man.

ΙV

Leonardo da Vinci was born in 1452, just forty years before the discovery of America by Columbus. He belongs to that wonderfully enthusiastic age—the Renascence—that period of the Re-birth, when after centuries of dormancy the souls of men awoke to the beauty and the wonder of the external world; when the inspiration of Greece broke the fetters of slavish imitation; when learning became so democratic as to demolish the strongholds of superstition. It was during this time that Leonardo, a boy between ten and fifteen, came to Florence to study art in the studio of Verrocchio. Cosmo de Medici was the

princely ruler in a brilliant society of poets, scholars, and artists. Fra Angelico had died when Leonardo was three years old, but his glorious angels in their freshness of beauty remained to gild the walls of San Marco; Donatello, whose sturdy realism compelled the Florentines to recognise the worth of their own time and place, lived until Leonardo was fourteen; the irrepressible Fra Fillipo Lippi, now scandalizing his order by an unclerical escapade and now showing to his fellow-monks, if not the beauty of holiness, the holiness of beauty, was aiming to show the beauty and the wonder and the power of all things made by God; Botticelli, "the master of the graceful line, the exquisite genius whose refined mediæval soul sought so earnestly and ineffectually to grasp the spirit of Greek culture," must have been an inspiration to Leonardo, but five years younger. Besides these there were Gozzoli, Luca and Andrea della Robbia, Ghirlandajo, and Ghiberti, the maker of the most wonderful gates ever cast in bronze. Finally there came to be at the head of Florentine affairs that brilliant prince, Lorenzo, whose quality of leadership in all things pertaining to the arts and literature won for him the deserved title of "The Magnificent."

It was in such an age and from such a group that Leonardo rose to be master in all things pertaining to art. He himself had been richly endowed by nature. Tall, graceful, with a face strong and faultless in contour he moved about with the ease and dignity of a Greek god. Amiable and generous he made friends of all classes; he loved and was loved even by the animals, which he loved to such an extent as to become a vegetarian rather than inflict death on any living creature. He was a breeder of horses, and refused to sell his own, even when he was in sore need of money. It is said the wildest horse would yield to the firm eye and controlling hand of Leonardo.

V

When Leonardo was about thirty years of age he left Florence to reside in Milan. It was during his stay in Milan that he painted the "Last Supper." But after the triumphant entry of Louis XII into Milan, October, 1499, Leonardo left Milan, visiting Mantua and Venice, and in 1500 was back again in Florence. When he returned to his native city, many of the famous group of his early days, including Lorenzo the Magnificent, had passed to the great Beyond. A new star had risen, that of the mighty Michelangelo, then a young man of twenty-five. The fame of the "Last Supper" had spread throughout Italy, and so when Leonardo returned he was welcomed in a chorus of delight by the younger genera-But in this song of praise there was one voice strangely silent, the voice of Michelangelo!

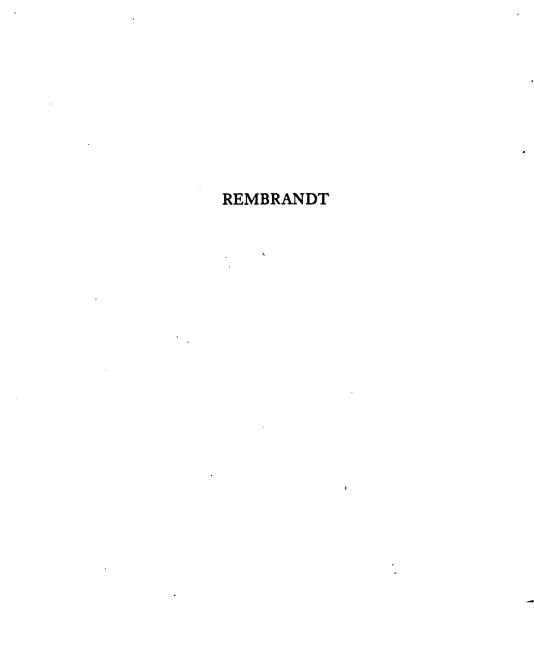
It is possible that the younger man was jealous of the greater fame of the older, but it is more likely Michelangelo was silent because serious-minded, intense, and of strong religious conviction, he looked upon the versatile Leonardo as a trifler in art and an innovator in belief. There is a well-known story of how, shortly after Leonardo's return to Florence, the two great rivals chanced to meet. Several men, standing in a small group on the street, were discussing a passage from their great poet, Dante, when Leonardo happened to pass that way. They asked his opinion. Just then Michelangelo passed by. Leonardo, knowing that Michelangelo was a great student of Dante, politely called upon the younger man to give an opinion and explanation. elangelo savagely retorted, "Thou who madest a model of a horse to cast it in bronze, and finding thyself unable to do so, wert forced with shame to give up the attempt, explain it thyself, if thou canst." Surely this was not the retort courteous!

"It is easy to picture the scene to the mind's eye," writes Mr. Rose; "the narrow Florentine streets where men must pass close to one another; the frowning palaces of dark stone on either side; the grave burghers in earnest converse; Leonardo coming up in all his manly beauty, the golden locks now tinged with gray falling about his shoulders, clad in splendid garments and with the manners of a prince, always at leisure to converse with worthy men; the young Michelangelo hurrying past, powerfully built but rather short and without grace, his

naturally homely features rendered still more so by his broken nose, roughly clad in woolen garments, his mind full of his work and of the terrible prophecies of the martyred Savonarola, with no time to talk to any one; the courteous invitation, the churlish rebuff, and the mortification of the master, accustomed to being treated with respect, even by the great of the earth."

VI

The last few years of Leonardo's life were spent in France. Feeling that his end was near, on April 23, 1519, he made his will, bequeathing the most of his possessions to Francesco Melzi, "as a reward for the pleasant services he has rendered me in the past." He died on May 2, at Amboise. Vasari tells us that he died in the arms of King Francis, but this is incorrect, as the King had to be informed by letter from Melzi that the great painter had died. In a letter written to the two brothers at Florence, Melzi utters a sentiment that the world after four hundred years re-echoes,—" Every one grieves over the death of such a man, whom it is no longer in the power of nature to create."



Rembrandt belongs to the breed of artists which can have no posterity. His place is with the Michelangelos, the Shaksperes, the Beethovens. An artistic Prometheus, he stole the celestial fire, and with it put life into what was inert, and expressed the immaterial and evasive sides of nature in his breathing forms.

EMILE MICHEL.



THE NIGHT WATCH Rembrandt

į

REMBRANDT

I

In the Ryksmuseum of Amsterdam hangs a painting that is now generally considered one of the great pictures of the world; its completion in 1632 marked the turning-point in the career of the artist who painted it. It is the "March out of the Civic Guard," or, as it is commonly called, "The Night Watch," by Rembrandt. That a great painting should mark the turning-point in an artist's career seems natural and proper, but the famous masterpiece in this case, strangely enough, marks the turning-point from worldly prosperity to poverty and neglect.

And this is the story of how it came to pass: In Rembrandt's time it was customary for the many guilds and corporations to decorate the hall in which they met with a painting containing the portraits of the guild or corporation. Today many such pictures can still be found in Holland. Usually the artist painted the group in a conventional manner, with about as much originality in composition as a modern photographer would use in taking a snapshot of a baseball team. But when Rembrandt was offered

1600 florins, an unusually large sum for such a commission, to paint the company of the civic guard, he determined to produce something of which the civic guard would be extremely proud. He would break away from the conventional custom of painting a formal group of lifeless, self-conscious Hollanders who blankly stared into space while their portraits were being painted. And the result was a lively scene, men in action, who have heard the call to arms. This picture has been the object of profound study both by art critics and investigators. Its migrations, mutilations, and re-touchings have been numbered and recorded. The connoisseurs have bewailed the lack of preparatory sketching as indicated by the faults of proportion, they have noted the "motley costumes and heterogeneous weapons of the company, and the extraordinary confusion," the enigmatical presence of the two little girls, and the undiscoverable meaning of the sudden sortie.

"To us," writes M. Michel in his sumptuous edition of Rembrandt, "we must confess, the master's intention seems patent at the first glance. The incident is unquestionably a call to arms of the civic guard. The two officers have hastened to the domicile of the company; they seek to stimulate the zeal of their followers by pressing forward themselves. The captain gives his orders to the lieutenant; behind them the drum beats the alarm, and the ensign unfurls his standard. Every man snatches up a

weapon of some sort, musket, lance, or halberd. Dogs bark; children, eager to share in the commotion, slip in among the soldiers. The composition agrees on every point with the idea it suggests, and there is no room for doubt as to the theme." In answer to the criticism that the picture is pent in and imprisoned by the frame, and that it is cut short at each end, it has been discovered that Rembrandt's original has been mutilated by cutting off parts of the ends.

When Reynolds saw the picture in 1781, it was so begrimed and blackened by smoke and dirt that he could scarcely recognize Rembrandt's touch. in 1889 M. Hopman made a most successful restoration of the picture, removing the smoke and grime of ages and bringing back the original coloring by using the fumes of cold alcohol. "The blacks have recovered their rich velvety quality, the light colors their freshness, and, although the contrasts have become more marked in the process, the transparent shadows so modify the transitions, that there is no hardness in the effect. Many passages that were almost invisible have come to light; the eye is charmed by countless unsuspected beauties, but in spite of the mass of detail that has emerged, the composition has gained unity and harmony, as a whole. . . . It is now evident that Rembrandt painted the scene in sunlight. There is not the slightest indication of artificial light, and it is even possible to deduce the

exact position of the sun at the moment, from the shadow cast by Banning Cocq's hand on his lieutenant's tunic."

Such is the "Night Watch." But we have not yet explained why so marvellous a composition should prove the ruin of the painter. His patrons did not see in the painting what posterity has seen. They had paid 1600 florins, about 100 florins apiece, to have their physiognomies handed down to posterity. They did not care for artistic effects in composition and harmony. They wanted portraits that could be seen, and each was to be as prominent as another. Captain Cocq and his lieutenant had no cause for complaint, but what must have been the feelings of those patriots who served as illustrations of Rembrandt's shadows! If not "butchered to make a Roman holiday," they had been obscured to make a Rembrandt chiaroscuro.

The general public, too, saw nothing to admire in this variation from the conventional. The painting which today, in popular judgment at least, ranks as one of the world's masterpieces brought ruin to the painter, for after the "Night Watch," Rembrandt's commissions for work decreased and financial misfortunes finally culminated in bankruptcy.

II

There are three paintings that stand out as epochmaking in the career of Rembrandt. The "Night Watch" has already been described. Equally important are the "Anatomy Lesson," and the "Syndics of the Drapers' Guild." The first, painted long before the "Night Watch," brought him early fame in his own day; the second, completed about eight years before his death, has won him unqualified admiration from the connoisseurs and critics of the present.

Since 1555, when the ban against dissection for the purposes of instruction had been removed, the Hollanders had been patient investigators in the field of anatomy. Their more important cities had "Theaters of Anatomy," places where skilled surgeons gave lessons in anatomy while dissecting a corpse. These halls were sometimes embellished with the portraits of the demonstrator and his disciples. The picture usually represented the demonstrator as the center of a group of students, or fellow-surgeons. Before Rembrandt entered the field. the painter arranged the group conventionally. Sometimes also the cadaver presented a grewsome and revolting reality. When Nicholaes Tulp, as he is now called, though his real name was Claes Pietersz, professor of anatomy, and seven directors of the Amsterdam guild of surgeons commissioned Rembrandt to paint their corporation-picture, the artist determined to break away from tradition. He succeeded so well that at the age of twenty-six he found himself the portrait-painter of Holland.

After acknowledging the defects that have been observed in this painting, the effect startling rather than strong, the puffiness and ill-construction of the corpse, the lack of the impressiveness of death, M. Michel points out that the greatness of Rembrandt's "Anatomy Lesson" can be understood only when one compares his composition with those of his predecessors. "But with the reservations we have noted, we shall find many beauties to admire; foremost among them the figure of Tulp, its happy simplicity of pose, its decision and vigor of expression, and the intelligent faces of the two disciples nearest the master, who hang upon every word, gazing intently at him, and endeavoring to penetrate his ut-But the composition in its entirety most thought. is more striking than any of these fragmentary excellencies. It is remarkable for the sobriety of the details, their perfect subordination, and the elimination of all such as by their puerility or vulgarity might impair the gravity of the subject. . . . Popular instinct has not been at fault in this case. . . . It will be no over-statement of its historical importance to say that it forms an epoch not only in Rembrandt's career but in the art of his country."

The "Syndics of the Drapers' Guild," or, as it is sometimes called, the "Syndics of the Cloth Hall," has never captivated the popular fancy as have the "Night Watch" and the "Anatomy Lesson," but to the chosen few who are connoisseurs the "Syndics"

is preëminently Rembrandt's masterpiece. It now hangs in the Ryksmuseum of Amsterdam. It is conventional in grouping, the five important personages being arranged around a table, with a servant standing slightly in the rear. It has been suggested that these dignitaries, remembering the "Night Watch," had stipulated that the painter was to take no liberties, but should arrange the portraits as other painters were doing. But genius always "finds a way." There is in the faces and figures of these honest, sturdy burghers the stamp of vivid reality. We admire the unstudied variety of gesture and attitude, the solid structure of the figures, the expressive quality of each head, and the unity of composition. With respect to the color, critics have praised the intense velvety blacks, the "warm whites with brilliant carnations, which seem to have been kneaded, as it were, with sunshine," and the general harmony and vivacity of the whole. "Never before had he achieved such perfection; never again was he to repeat the triumph of that supreme moment when all his natural gifts joined forces with the vast experience of a life devoted to his art in such a crowning manifestation of his genius. Brilliant and poetical, his masterpiece was at the same time correct and unexceptional. Criticism, which still wrangles over the 'Night Watch,' is unanimous in admiration of the 'Syndics.' In it the colorist and the draughtsman, the simple and the subtle, the realist and the

idealist, alike recognize one of the masterpieces of art." This is the verdict of modern criticism; what the people of his own time thought of the "Syndics" we do not know. As we have found no contemporary praise, it is likely that the portrait evoked no enthusiasm in Rembrandt's own day.

III

Rembrandt was born in Leyden, 1606; there are those who place the birth a year or two later. exact date is of little significance. Far more significant is the era into which he was born. struggle against Spanish oppression had ended; in this contest the city of Leyden had played a heroic part, especially in 1573-74 when repulsing the besieging Spaniards. When William the Silent, in recognition of the city's heroism and its poverty due to the siege, offered exemption from taxation, Levden asked for a university instead. The new University of Leyden soon became a vigorous force, gathering to itself the great thinkers and scholars of the age, and exerting a liberalizing influence which placed Holland in the forefront of civilization. was the first nation in Europe to abandon the burning of witches and to repeal the laws against the Jews. It is significant that Rembrandt was born in a city with a noble history, and in a time when Holland was prosperous in commerce, literature, and the arts and sciences.

But Rembrandt was not born in a literary or artistic circle. His father, Harmen Gerritszoon, the szoon usually contracted to sz, being a patronymic like the English son, was a miller, and as the mill was on a branch of the Rhine or Ryn, the people called him Harmen Gerritsz van Ryn. This is why Rembrandt is known as Rembrandt Harmensz van Ryn. He was the fifth of six children. The parents planned to give Rembrandt a better education than that enjoyed by his three elder brothers, so they sent him to a Latin school where he should be prepared to enter the University of Leyden, "to be enabled, when he had arrived at mature years, to benefit by his learning the town and the state."

Latin had no charms for the youthful son of the miller. In fact, Rembrandt never did become a He had neither the insatiable curiosity of a scholar. Leonardo nor the broad culture of a Rubens. Perhaps this is why his mythological and allegorical paintings are the least happy of his productions. fifteen he is in the studio of Jacob van Schwanenburch, a painter of ordinary skill and ability, but competent to teach the youthful enthusiast the rudiments of painting. After serving the usual apprenticeship of three years, Rembrandt went to Amsterdam where he studied under the popular Lastman, whose title to fame consists in the fact that he was for a short time the teacher of Rembrandt, but who then was the most successful of painters, amassing a

fortune by catering to the taste of the public. It took Rembrandt but six months to find out that he had nothing to learn from Lastman and his kind, painters whose only aim was the making of money. He returned to Leyden, determined to be his own master, or at least to take nature as his only teacher.

IV

Leyden was learned and philosophic, but not artistic in its interests, so Rembrandt wisely, when twenty-five years of age, removed to Amsterdam. There he soon became the busiest and most prosperous painter in the city. We know that during the four years succeeding 1632 he painted a hundred and two portraits. The year after he came to Amsterdam he met Saskia van Uvlenborch, the woman who became his wife in June, 1634. Six years younger than Rembrandt, she was an attractive girl of a family far higher in the social scale than the Never has the wife of a great artist been painter's. painted more lovingly or more frequently. From these many portraits we know that she had light blond hair and a face radiant with the happiness of wifely love, but one can hardly say that she was a beautiful woman. His most beautiful portrait of Saskia is the one at Cassel, but other masterpieces of her can be found in cities from St. Petersburg. Russia, to Pittsburg, U.S. He painted her not only in conventional garb, but also as Flora, as Danaë, as

Bellona, and as Bathsheba with a letter from David. In Dresden is the familiar portrait in which Saskia is seated on Rembrandt's knee while he holds a wine glass in his hand with a gay look of exhilara-From this portrait one might easily get the impression that Rembrandt was a gay reveler. "Nothing could be further from the fact," writes "He was abstemious and content with innocent pleasures. He was no more a wine-bibber than he was soldier, an Oriental monarch, a lord of high degree addicted to hawking, or any of the other characters in which he used to pose before the mirror as he painted his own portrait. The young couple lived much to themselves, content with one another's society, she sitting by his side as he worked at the easel or serving him as model if he so desired. Their short married life seems to have been one long honeymoon. She has been blamed for not restraining his natural prodigality, but the reproach is hardly just. He was hopelessly extravagant in the purchase of iewels, of Oriental fabrics, of brocaded silks and works of art; but he no doubt persuaded her that they were an admirable investment, which could be disposed of at an enhanced price. Nor was there any visible occasion to economize. Rembrandt was the most popular painter of one of the richest cities in Europe. Every one was clamoring for a portrait by his hand. He was receiving from 500 to 600 florins for a portrait, and had more orders than he

Money was rolling in at a rate that excould fill. ceeded all their requirements; and there was no indication that the golden rain would cease. Rembrandt afterwards declared, and the court found it to be true, that at the time of Saskia's death they were worth 40,750 florins; which proves that there was no wasting of their substance. . . . Moreover, there is nothing to show that Saskia ever spent a florin unnecessarily, or that she could control her husband's expenditure. In money matters Rembrandt was always a child. . . . In fact, no stain rests upon Saskia's memory. She seems to have been a sweet. gentle and loving wife, who made her husband supremely happy during the few years that she dwelt by his side; years which were rich in splendid works whose number and excellence prove that Rembrandt was spending his days in labor, and that he found in his home the peace and joy that strengthened him for his work. It must be remembered, too, that she was an heiress, and brought him a considerable estate."

That Rembrandt was a far greater master in art than in household economics is also recorded by Baldinucci, a Florentine writer who was informed by one of Rembrandt's pupils that "when Rembrandt was present at a sale, especially when pictures or drawings by great masters were put up, he was accustomed to make an enormous advance on the first bid, which generally silenced all competitors. To those who expressed their surprise at such a proceeding he replied that by these means he helped to raise the status of his profession." And in commenting upon the painter's generosity Baldinucci adds, "He willingly lent all his possessions to artists who required them for their works. He was to be admired not less for his noble devotion to his art than for a kindness of heart verging on extravagance."

The years from 1632 to 1642 were the happy golden years in the career of Rembrandt. year 1642, the date of the "Night Watch," is also the year in which his Saskia died, leaving to the care of this impractical sorrowing genius a ninemonths old child, Titus. From this time the story of Rembrandt's life is the record of continued industry, unceasing development in his individuality as artist, and of neglect, bankruptcy, and poverty. He was of such an independent nature, so sure of his art. or at least so fixed in his methods, that he never swerved a hairbreadth to curry favor by conforming to the taste of the public. This is why he is one of the few supreme masters in painting, and the supreme master in etching. Genius must be sure of itself; it must trust itself, and then, as Emerson tells us, every heart will vibrate to that iron string. Rembrandt listened to the voice within him, not to the voice of Italy with its Florentine and Venetian

schools, nor to the demands of the rich burghers who would have patronized the Amsterdam painter had he conformed to Amsterdam ideals.

His passing from prosperity to obscurity was not a sudden drop, for even after the "Night Watch," the Stadholder gave Rembrandt two commissions, for one of which, "The Adoration of the Magi," now in Munich, the painter received 2400 florins, a large sum. During the next twenty-three years of the artist's life, he sank away gradually from public notice, neither government nor rich burgher realizing that the greatest painter of his age was ending his days in neglect, "disappearing," as La Farge well puts it, "in a shadow like that which envelops the mystery of his painting."

It is to be remembered that Rembrandt is not the only Dutch painter who ended his days in poverty. What of Ruysdaal, and Frans Hals, and Hobbema, and Jan Steen?

V

A generation after the death of Rembrandt his great nephew observed that "a short time ago the ignorance of reputed connoisseurs was so gross with regard to the work of the mighty Rembrandt that it was possible to buy one of his portraits for sixpence." Two centuries later an American millionaire, according to current reports, paid \$600,000 for one production, "The Mill." When he died thir-

teen florins were spent on his funeral; in 1906, when celebrating his tercentenary, Leyden and Amsterdam spent thousands in his honor. When he lived his house, Saskia's home, was sold under the hammer of the sheriff: now the municipality has purchased the property which has become the shrine of worshiping admirers who come from all parts of the earth to see the place where once lived Rembrandt. Within a generation of his work, criticism believed that "the vulgar and prosaic aspects of a subject were the only ones he was capable of noting," and that his was a "manner founded on a delusion." Today we say that Rembrandt was universal in his sympathy, seeing where others were blind, that the rat-catcher as well as the saint, the aged beggar as well as the prince, the wrinkled old Dutch vrouw as well as Cupid, were seen as worthy of the interpreting brush of the painter or needle of the etcher; that he is of the race of Michelangelo and Velasquez, of Titian and Raphael, of Leonardo and Rubens.

In this brief sketch we have named but a few of his paintings. To have a proper estimate of the greatness of the man, of his industry and variety, it is well to know that Bode in his list includes 600 paintings and about 350 etchings. Strange to say, comparatively few of his paintings are in Holland, barely thirty. In England alone there are over 180. The British Museum has the most important

collection of his etchings. In late years some of his finest work has found a place in American galleries and private collections.

Composition of line was the great achievement of the Florentine school; the Venetians excelled in brilliancy and harmony of color; it remained for Rembrandt to show the magic that lies in light and shade, or chiaroscuro. He is the "poet of the mystery of light." Correggio is the only painter who can be named even as a second in this particular. "By his way of treating light," comments M. Cherbuliez, "he gives a certain magical and supernatural quality to the most common realities, so that his works are at once passages from nature and fantastic tales, the fairy vision of a great soul." other words, this intense realist who saw beauty in the common things of earth was so keen in his insight that he needed not the brilliancy of the rainbow colors to kindle his soul into the creative joy of the artist; light and darkness were sufficient for him.

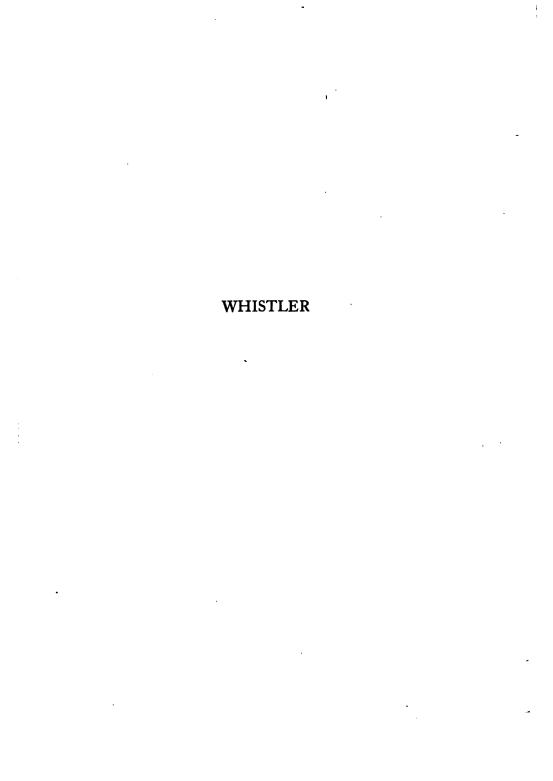
Rembrandt himself is reported to have said that he aimed to give "as much life and reality as possible." In looking at the portraits of his men and women, one feels the intense reality of his art. He delighted in painting the faces of the aged, where the experiences of the years had wrought, in the expression of the eyes and in the curves of the mouth, the character of the soul within. It has been said

that he was the only artist who could paint a wrinkle.

How he studied the human face! In his youth he peered into the patient, loving face of his good mother, of whom, not counting the etchings, we have no fewer than five portraits; there are eight of his rugged father, the honest miller. When there was no other face near, he studied his own, looking into a mirror and painting Rembrandt as a handsome youth with a feather in his hat, and in his old age painting Rembrandt with haggard eyes. From the many portraits of himself by himself we can read the history of the man. Keen, analytic, penetrating, Rembrandt was too honest to flatter even himself. And so as we follow the long line of portraits extending from the handsome youth to the rugged, weatherbeaten face of age, we say, "This is the very Rembrandt himself! Here is the joyous youth, here the happy bridegroom, the contented and prosperous husband, the famed painter, the master of light and shadow now entering upon the long years of neglect, the face growing haggard and flabby, the eyes growing dimmer and sadder, the mouth in gloomy despair."

But after all, we may be over-emphasizing the tragic element in Rembrandt's life. He was a realist who faced life resolutely, tasting sorrow's crown of sorrows, which, the poet tells us, is remembering happier things. But he was also an idealist. To do well whatsoever one's hand finds to do is one

of the supreme satisfactions of life. The great art of life is to take joy in one's work. Must we not think of Rembrandt as one who looked upon his work and knew that it was good? This master who bathed his figures in the luminous light that never was, on sea or land, was a dreamer, and perhaps it is the dreamer alone that lives.



In the beginning, men went forth each day—
some to do battle, some to the chase; others again
to dig and delve in the field—all that they might
gain and live, or lose and die. Until there was
found one among them differing from the rest. . . .
This man who took no joy in the way of his brethren—who cared not for conquest; and fretted in
the field—this designer of quaint patterns—this
deviser of the beautiful—who perceived in Nature
about him curious curvings, as faces are seen in the
fire—this dreamer apart was the first artist.

WHISTLER.

WHISTLER

I

Whistler was known as a man of quick wit and repartee. When he talked of the "shock of surprise that was Balaam's when the first critic proffered his opinion," it was gleefully pointed out by a critic who imagined that now he had him on the hip that "the Ass was right, although, nay, because he was an Ass." Without any delay there came this rejoinder from the artist: "I find, on searching again, that historically you are right. The fact, doubtless, explains the conviction of the race in their mission, but I fancy you will admit that this is the only Ass on record who ever did 'see the Angel of the Lord!' and that we are past the age of miracles." His most famous retort, perhaps, is his oft-quoted reply to an admiring friend who warmly assured Whistler that his name would go down to remote posterity along with that of Velasquez,—"Why drag in Velasquez?" This reminds one of another incident. Somebody said to Whistler, "The Prince of Wales says he knows you." The artist's reply was, "That's only his side."

He was once summoned as witness in a suit where the purchaser of a picture had refused to pay for it.

- "You are a painter of pictures?"
- "Yes."
- "And you know the value of pictures?"
- "Oh, no!"
- "At least you have your own ideas about value?"
- " Certainly."
- "And you recommended the defendant to buy this picture for £200?"
 - " I did."
- "Mr. Whistler, it is reported that you received a goodly sum for this recommendation—is there anything in that?"
- "Oh, nothing I assure you —" (yawning) "nothing but the indelicacy of the suggestion."

In his 1883 exhibition Whistler used yellow as the prevailing tone — yellow wall, yellow matting on the floor, yellow chairs, yellow flower pots. The attendants wore yellow and white; Whistler wore yellow socks, and his assistants were decorated with yellow cravats. In the catalog of this exhibition he took revenge upon his earlier critics by printing after the title of each etching a quotation from some particularly banal criticism, under the general motto: "Out of Their Own Mouths Ye Shall Judge Them." Here are some of the excerpts,—"Prodigious amateur — there are years when Mr.

Whistler gives great promise." "Mr. Whistler is eminently vulgar," "Mr. Whistler has produced too much for his reputation."

One of his critics was Mr. Frederick Wedmore, who complained that he had been quoted as using the word "understand" when he had in fact written "understate." This brought a characteristic apology. "My carelessness is culpable," he said, "and the misprint without excuse, for naturally I have all along known, and the typographer should have been duly warned that with Mr. Wedmore, as with his brethren, it is always a matter of understating, and not at all of understanding."

He was violently indignant with Mr. Hamerton for a criticism appearing in *The Saturday Review* that there were more varieties of tint in the "Symphony in White, No. III" than the title justified. "Mon Dieu!" he retorts, "did this wise person expect white hair and chalked faces? And does he then in his astounding consequence believe that a symphony in F contains no other note, but shall be a continual repetition of F, F, F. . . . Fool!"

Robert Henri, the landscape artist, tells this story in illustration of Whistler's cleverness in retort:— Whistler was generally at war with artists of the Bouguereau school, whose overfinished and commonplace work he could not abide. One day while walking in Piccadilly, he met Sir Frederick Leighton, who has been called the English Bouguereau.

The two men sauntered along together, talking art.
"But my dear Whistler," said Leighton, "you leave your work so rough and sketchy. Why do you never finish?"

Whistler screwed his glass into his eye and gave a fiendish laugh.

"My dear Leighton," said he, "why do you ever begin?"

The list of quick retorts is long, and helps to explain why the author of The Gentle Art of Making Enemies was popularly supposed to be an adept in that unchristian art. Degas, it is said, once told Whistler to his face that one would hardly suppose from his talk and demeanor that he was a great artist. And Royal Cortissoz writes: "That, I confess, was my first impression of him, for as he minced about his drawing-room in the Rue de Bac. one summer morning a dozen years ago, flourishing a bird cage before my eyes like a dancer flirting a fan, he seemed as unlike an eminent painter as any one I have ever seen. But this was mere surface froth, which disappeared as one came to know him better. He was, even in his gravest moments, a distinctly picturesque figure, slight, erect, and with gestures of the most birdlike vivacity. Yet he had withal admirable dignity, and to the picturesqueness of his personality there was added the charm of his talk. . . . The making of enemies indubitably afforded him a kind of fearful joy, but there were lovable traits in his nature, kindness, and generosity, and affection for children, and to lay stress upon his quarrels is to do a deep injustice to his memory." Mr. Chesterton, however, is of the opinion that Whistler was not a great personality, because he thought so much about himself.

II

As to the lovable side of his character there is abundant and convincing testimony. Harper Pennington, one of his closest pupils, has given us a fine description of the man:

"The man was above all things gregarious he did not like to be alone - and most intenselv human. He had his foibles, faults and virtues like The Whistler I knew was clean of person and speech. I never heard him utter one word that might not be repeated without offending the most easily shocked of prudes. He has been described as untidy. He was, on the contrary, the only man who ever washed his hair three times every day, and was fastidious to the point of being prinky about his person. His clothes, generally black, were always simple in the extreme and spotless, even when, in those old Venice days of dreadful poverty, they were worn threadbare - actually in holes. His courage was indisputable. would fight any man, no matter what size or weight, and the jaunty cheerfulness with which he bore pri-

vations, when he lacked everything, even the necessary materials for his work, deceived those who were his daily companions and sufficiently proved his moral pluck.

"He wore a black silk ribbon tie at his neck, a bow with six-inch loops and fluttering ends, but that was all that was unusual in his attire, unless the long bamboo wands of canes — a dark one for the night and a light for day — should be included. Nothing that glittered, not even a watch-chain or ring, formed any part of his costume. A tiny white or yellow flower at his buttonhole was his unique adornment.

"... His cackling laugh hid many a bitter thrust that had gone home and hurt him to the quick. He laughed, and then would come the swift reposte of witty repartee. He never attacked a living creature, never struck the first blow, and would have been glad to live in peace with all the world. But so coarse were the criticisms of his person and his work that he was driven to defend Art. which was the only thing he could not joke about. Upon the rare occasions when he talked with me, as a master might, about his work, his face itself seemed transfigured.

"Brave when he was well, his cowardice when ill or in pain was comical. If he caught cold he would disappear, and those who knew him well were sure he had fled to his doctor — his brother's house in Wimpole Street. Dr. Whistler told me that Jimmy would appear all muffled up and say: 'Willie, I am ill! I am going up to bed—here—and won't go home until you've cured me!' Any little malady was enough to demoralize him. In hours of weakness he would hide away like a wounded animal and not show up again until he had been nursed back to a normal state.

"Whistler was extremely frugal and abstemious. He ate and drank most moderately the plainest fare. He liked dainty dishes and rare old wine, but had a horror of the 'groaning board' at huge set feasts and formal banquets. He could cook quite decently himself, and sometimes make an omelet or scrambled eggs, but these culinary feats I never saw performed; as to the Master's knowledge of wine, it was very limited indeed. I have seen him mistake a heavy vintage of champagne for 'Tisane.' I never saw him cook anything, even in his poorest days, in Venice, but I know that he liked a good dinner at a club even when it was punctually served and consisted of quite ordinary delicacies such as other men delight in."

A fellow etcher, Mr. Joseph Pennell, in his entertaining book on Whistler writes in a very appreciative vein,—"He was popular with the children, and delighted in music, though he was not too critical, for he was known to call the passing hurdy-gurdy into his garden, and have it ground under his

windows. Occasionally the brother (Greaves) played, so that Whistler might dance. He was always full of drolleries and fun. He would imitate a man sawing, or two men fighting at the door, so cleverly that his brother never ceased to be astonished when he walked into the room alone and unhurt. He delighted in American mechanical toys and his house was full of Japanese dolls. One great doll, dressed like a man, he would take with him, not only to Greaves, but to dinners at the little Holland House, where the Princess then lived, and to other houses, where he put it through amazing performances."

Lilian Whiting's life of Louise Chandler Moulton records a pleasant incident in the early life of Whistler:

"Among the schoolmates of Mrs. Moulton's childish years was a boy who was afterward the artist Whistler, one year her senior.

"As children they often walked home from school together, and one night the little girl was bewailing that she could not draw a map like the beautiful one he had displayed to an admiring group that day.

"It was a gorgeous creation in colored crayons, an 'arrangement' that captivated the village school with much the same ardor that the future artist was destined to inspire from the art connoisseurs of two continents. A sad object, indeed, was the dis-

cordant affair that Ellen Louise held up in selfabasement, while she poured out her enthusiasm on his achievement.

"The lad received this praise with lofty scorn.

"'That's nothing!' he exclaimed. 'You think this is anything? Take it; I don't want it; you just see what I can do to-morrow! I'll bring you then something worth talking about.'

"With the precious trophy in her possession, the little girl made her way home. And, true to his word, the next morning 'Jimmy' brought her a package whose very wrapping revealed the importance of its contents; and when she had breathlessly opened it, there was disclosed an exquisite little painting.

"Under a Gothic arch that breathed—no one knew what enchanted hints of the 'glory that was Greece and the grandeur that was Rome,' or some far-away dreams of Venice, or some other dimly prefigured marvel in the child's fancy, was an old monk; through the picture were silver gleams, and a vague glint of purple, and altogether, it held some far prophecy of the brilliant future yet undisclosed.

"All her life Mrs. Moulton kept the gift. It had an unobtrusive place in her drawing-room, and even figured modestly at the great Whistler exhibition which was held in Boston by the Copley Society after the death of the artist."

Ш

On August 11, 1888, Whistler married Beatrix Godwin, the widow of E. W. Godwin, the architect. She was a large, handsome woman, with a foreign appearance. Whistler took pleasure in the tradition that there was gypsy blood in her family. She was intelligent, had been an art student, and was always interested in Whistler's work as an artist.

The following account of how their marriage was brought about is from Mr. Labouchere, the editor and owner of *Truth*:

"I believe that I am responsible for his marriage to the widow of Mr. Godwin, the architect. She was a remarkably pretty woman, and very agreeable, and both she and he were thorough Bohemians. I was dining with them and some others one evening at Earl's Court. They were obviously greatly attracted to each other, and in a vague sort of way they thought of marrying. So I took the matter in hand to bring things to a practical point. 'Jimmy,' I said, 'will you marry Mrs. Godwin?'-'Certainly,' he replied.—'Mrs. Godwin,' I said, 'will you marry Jimmy?'—'Certainly,' she replied. - 'When?' I asked. 'Oh, some day,' said Whistler.—'That won't do,' I said; 'we must have a date.' So they both agreed that I should choose the day, what church to come to for the ceremony, provide the clergyman, and give the bride away.

fixed an early date, and got the then Chaplain of the House of Commons (the Rev. Mr. Byng) to perform the ceremony. It took place a few days later.

"After the ceremony was over, we adjourned to Whistler's studio, where he had prepared a banquet. The banquet was on the table, but there were no chairs. So we sat on packing cases. The happy pair, when I left, had not quite decided whether they would go that evening to Paris, or remain in the studio. How unpractical they were was shown when I happened to meet the bride the day before the marriage in the street:

"'Don't forget to-morrow,' I said.—'No,' she replied, 'I am just going to buy my trousseau.'—'A little late for that, is it not?' I asked.—'No,' she answered, 'for I am only going to buy a new toothbrush and a new sponge, as one ought to have new ones when one marries.'"

It is a pleasure to add that Whistler found his wife a sympathetic companion, quick to comfort him in his disappointments and ready to rejoice with him in his successes. Their happy married life was ended by her untimely death in May, 1896.

τv

Whistler was fond of calling his pieces "Nocturnes" and "Symphonies"; the "Nocturnes" appearing principally between 1866 and 1884. He

originally had called his night scenes "Moonlights," but acting on the suggestion of a friend, Mr. Leyland, changed the name to "Nocturnes." During the Whistler-Ruskin trial, Whistler gave this definition of a "Nocturne":

"I have perhaps meant rather to indicate an artistic interest alone in the work, divesting the picture from any outside sort of interest which might otherwise have been attached to it. It is an arrangement of line, form, and color first, and I make use of any incident of it which shall bring about a symmetrical result. Among my works are some night pieces; and I have chosen the word Nocturne because it generalizes and simplifies the whole set of them."

A "Nocturne in Black and Gold," or "The Falling Rocket," now owned by Mrs. Untermyer, did more to bring the artist before the public eye than anything he had done. This picture, as described by Sadakichi Hartmann, is "a blue-black night, broken by sparks of bursting skyrockets and weird forms of light, in which two illuminated towers are vaguely indicated. To the left a cluster of foliage and a crowd of people, felt, rather than seen."

When this 17 x 23 canvas was first exhibited at the Dudley Gallery, it attracted but little attention. Then Ruskin looked at it with unfriendly eye, waxed indignant and shouted: "I have seen and heard

much of cockney impudence before now, but never expected to hear a coxcomb ask two hundred guineas for flinging a pot of paint in the public face." This violent and alliterative phrase, although it may have given some pleasure to the painter who had a keen sense for good phrasing as well as for the value of publicity, aroused Whistler's resentment. Upon first meeting the criticism he said to Broughton, "It is the most debased style of criticism I have had thrown at me yet."

The immediate result was a libel suit in which Whistler won, for Ruskin was obliged to pay the costs of the trial, and one farthing to soothe the feelings of the insulted artist. He had asked for £1000; he got a farthing and more than the value of £1000 in free advertising,—to which, perhaps, he was not averse. The trial evoked countless letters to newspapers, and much discussion and attempted witticism. When the Figaro asked, "What is more natural than for a 'Whistler' to go in for 'airs'? Whistler is reported to have said, "Well, you know, I don't go so far as to Burne-Jones, but somebody ought to burn Jones's pictures."

Ruskin nowadays is lightly considered as an art critic, but the artist who sneers at the great word-painter's art criticism must not forget that the whole brotherhood of artists is indebted to Ruskin for his popularizing of art. It is, perhaps, too much to ask of one man that he should discern the uncommon

beauty of both a Turner and a Whistler. The "Nocturnes" had no forerunners either in English or Continental art. Whistler was what the Germans call a "path-making genius." And Ruskin forgot that beauty has its own excuse for being, or, like the most of us, was blind to all save the con-The painter's art was not lawless, ventional forms. but was discovering a new law. Not absolutely original, for even genius is dependent upon suggestion. Shakspere was not the first to feel the majestic swing of the English heroic blank verse, nor did he originate his plots. Whistler caught his inspiration from Japanese art. In the '60's Hiroshige prints were hung on the wall of his studio. It is said the "T" shape of "The Old Battersea Bridge," or as it is sometimes called, "A Nocturne of Blue and Gold," is almost an exact copy of a Hiroshige design. Whistler accomplished the rare feat of successfully "combining the two great art elements of the world, those of the East and the West."

Whistler, like the Japanese, wanted to leave something to the imagination. He looked upon Nature with the eye of a poet. That he has the soul of a poet can be felt not only by seeing his pictures but by reading his beautiful description of a river scene at night in his famous "Ten o'Clock" lecture.—

"When the evening mist clothes the river-side with poetry as with a veil, and the poor buildings



PORTRAIT OF THE PAINTER'S MOTHER Whistler

lose themselves in the dim sky and the tall chimneys become campanile, and the warehouses are palaces in the night, and the whole city hangs in the heavens, and fairy-land is before us—then the wayfarer hastens home, the workingman and the cultured one, the wise man and the one of pleasure cease to understand as they have ceased to see, and Nature, who for once has sung in tune, sings her exquisite song to the artist alone, her son and her master; her son in that he loves her, and her master in that he knows her."

v

The "Artist's Mother" and his "Carlyle" are conceded to be Whistler's masterpieces; the one hanging in the Luxembourg, the other in the Gallery at Glasgow; a third, "Sarasate," one of the most famous, hangs in Pittsburg. With that fondness for giving his pictures odd titles, "The Mother" and "Carlyle" portraits are called "Arrangements in Gray and Black," while the "Sarasate" is an "Arrangement in Black." Paris, Glasgow, Pittsburg, the homes of his most celebrated portraits! This would have appealed to the cosmopolite painter!

Of all Whistler's paintings I suppose the most popular is the portrait of his mother. The artist admires it for its technique,—the restraint of line and color, the quietness and dignity of the pose,

(for one has the feeling that the sitter could rest there forever) and the great effect produced by the simplest means; the man on the street, knowing nothing of technique, likes the portrait because to him the picture symbolizes the dignity and love of a patient woman whom he calls "Mother." Swinburne is not the only one who has admired its "intense pathos and tender depth of expression."

There were rare times when Whistler himself gave expression to his tender interest in the human quality of the portrait. From Mr. Harper Pennington we learn:

"Did I ever tell you of an occasion when Whistler let me see him with the paint off — with his brave mask down? Once standing by me in his studio — Tite Street — we were looking at the 'Mother.' I said some string of words about the beauty of the face and figure — and for some minutes Jimmy looked and looked, but he said nothing. His hand was playing with that tuft upon his nether lip. It was perhaps two minutes before he spoke. 'Yes,' very slowly and very softly — 'Yes — one does like to make one's mummy just as nice as possible!'"

Carlyle, seeing the "Mother," consented to give a few sittings for his own portrait. He came one morning, sat down, waited a few moments while Whistler made the final arrangements of canvas, brushes, and palette, and said: "And now, mon, fire away!"

When Carlyle noticed that Whistler did not think that that was the way to paint a portrait, he added:

"If ye're fighting battles or painting pictures, the only thing to do is to fire away!"

On another day Carlyle talked about others who

had painted his portrait:

"There was Mr. Watts, a mon of note. And I went to his studio, and there was much meestification, and screens were drawn round the easel, and curtains were drawn, and I was not allowed to see anything. And then, at last, the screens were put aside and there I was. And I looked. And Mr. Watts, a great mon, he said to me, 'How do you like it?' And then I turned to Mr. Watts and I said, 'Mon, I would have ye know I am in the hobit of wurin' clean lunen!'"

Of these sittings Mr. William Allingham wrote in his diary:

"Carlyle tells me he is sitting to Whistler. If C. makes signs of changing his position, W. screams out in an agonized tone: 'For God's sake don't move!' C. afterwards said that all W.'s anxiety seemed to be to get the coat painted to ideal perfection; the face went for little. He had begun by asking two or three sittings, but managed to get a great many. At last C. flatly rebelled. He used to define W. as the most absurd creature on the face of the earth."

VI

He was born in 1834 in Massachusetts; his boyhood days were passed in St. Petersburg; at seventeen he entered the Military Academy at West Point, leaving there in 1854 because of "deficiency in chemistry;" next we find him in Paris, joining, as Hartmann puts it, "the youthful band of artists, who fought for modernism and a new technique, and the glory of the *métier*, with an enthusiasm, a bravery and a devotion that has rarely been encountered;" then in London.

In 1863 his "The White Girl" attracted much attention in the Salon des Refusées, for although Zola said the crowd laughed in front of "La Dame en Blance," Paul Mantz said it was the "most important picture" in the exhibition and called it a " Symphonie du Blance " some years before Whistler adopted that title. Later we find our cosmopolite in South America, and as a result of that trip we have the "Valparaiso Harbor," now in the National Gallery of Art. Then back to London where his fame won him a generous income for a time, and an acquaintance with his Chelsea neighbors, - Rossetti, Swinburne, George Meredith, and Carlyle. 1870 he held an auction sale of the contents of his home, and in 1880 a sale of his pictures. He is in Venice in 1879, and from 1880 to 1890 he flits from place to place, mainly in England, France and

Belgium, finally making a somewhat permanent habitation in the Rue de Bac of Paris. During the next fifteen years there were eight London exhibitions of his pictures. He died on July 17, 1903, just having entered upon his seventieth year.

At his funeral on the 22d. there was a small attendance, as he was laid away near the grave of Hogarth in the old church at Chelsea. Mr. Pennell regrets that Whistler, a man fond of official recognition, received none at his funeral; that the man who was the most famous American that ever lived in London was at his funeral ignored by the American Embassy; that he who was an officer in the Legion of Honor, a member in two German Royal Academies and a Knight of the Order of St. Michael, and a Commander of the Crown of Italy, was laid to his final rest with no recognition from the Embassies of France, Germany, and Italy.

These are omissions that the friends of Whistler may regret, but on that stormy summer day, when the misty London fog was enveloping the scene with the magic and beauty and mystery that Whistler had taught the world to see, what cared the artist for the pomp and ceremony of kings and emperors! After life's fitful fever he had fallen asleep, forever safe from the malice of the critic's pen, finding a haven where the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest.



TURNER

He lived in two worlds — one the pictorial sightworld in which he was a profound scholar and a poet, the other the articulate, moral, word-world, in which he was a dunce and underbred. In the one he was great and happy, in the other he was small and miserable; for what philosophy he had was fatalist. The riddle of life was too hard for his incultivated intellect and starved heart to contemplate with any hope; he was only at rest in his dreamland.

COSMO MONKHOUSE.



THE FIGHTING TEMERAIRE Turner

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TURNER

I

"J. M. W. Turner is the only man who has ever given an entire transcript of the whole system of nature, and is, in this point of view, the only perfect landscape painter the world has ever seen. . . . We have had living with us, and painting for us, the greatest painter of all time, a man with whose supremacy of power no intellect of past ages can be put into comparison for a moment. . . . Glorious in conception, unfathomable in knowledge, solitary in power, with the elements waiting upon his will, and the night and morning obedient to his call, sent as a prophet of God to reveal to men the mysteries of the universe, standing like the great Angel of the Apocalypse clothed with a cloud, and with a rainbow upon his head, and with the sun and stars given into his hand."

This almost extravagant praise was written by Ruskin, the great admirer and enthusiastic exponent of the virtues and supremacy of the art of Turner,—that English painter who was born in a room above the commonplace barber shop of his father. That Turner sprang from humble stock is not strange.

Shakspere's father belonged to the English yeomanry; Carlyle was the son of a stone mason; Keats was the son of the keeper of a livery stable; Burns, of a poor tiller of the soil; Andrea del Sarto, of a tailor; and Domenichino, of a rope-maker. Genius is no respecter of origins.

His mother, Mary Turner, must have been a woman of a highly nervous temperament, for there is a record of her admission into the Bethlehem Hospital, a home for the insane. Much of Turner's eccentricity may be due to his inheritance from his mother. In the olden days when mediocrity or genius astonished by digression from the conventional, there were hints of the evil eye, or that the victim had eaten of the insane root, or had crossed the path of a ghost; but in modern times all abnormalities are traced back to the maternal grandmother. In Turner's case the cause was found to be in the plebeian parsimony of the barber father, and in the abnormality of the barber's nervous wife, one of whose brothers was a fishmonger at Margate and another a butcher at Brentford.

TT

Turner was born in 1775; fifteen years later he exhibited his first drawing at the Royal Academy, "A View of the Archbishop's Palace at Lambeth." As a mere child he had given evidence of the bent of his genius, drawing, sketching, and coloring en-

gravings. When the industrious and thrifty barber was asked by the patrons of his shop, "Well, Turner, have you settled yet what William is to be?" the father would reply, "It's all settled, sir; William is going to be a painter."

There is some evidence to the effect that Turner at fifteen was a merry-hearted boy. Mrs. Wheeler has given us her impressions of Turner the boy: "In early life my father's house was his second home, a haven of rest from many domestic trials too sacred to touch upon. Turner loved my father with a son's affection; and to me he was as an elder brother. Many are the times I have gone out sketching with him. I remember his scrambling up a tree to obtain a better view, and then he made a colored sketch, I handing up his colors as he wanted them. . . . Oh! what a different man would Turner have been if all the good and kindly feelings of his great mind had been called into action; but they lay dormant, and were known to so very few. was by nature suspicious, and no tender hand had wiped away early prejudices, the inevitable consequences of a defective education. Of all the lighthearted merry creatures I ever knew, Turner was the most so; and the laughter and fun that abounded when he was an inmate of our cottage was inconceivable, particularly with the juvenile members of the family."

From 1790 to 1797 he made sketching tours of

a great part of England and Wales, indefatigably drawing and observing nature at first hand. In 1798 after seeing Girtin's drawings of York, he made a journey through the Yorkshire region. His oil and water colors of that year show the stimulating effect of this trip. In 1799 he exhibited "The Battle of the Nile," the first of his naval pictures, and was elected to associate membership in the Royal Academy.

"He was now only twenty-four years old," writes Mr. Monkhouse, "and was at the head of his profession. In person he was small, with crooked legs, ruddy complexion, a prominent nose, clear blue eyes, and a somewhat Jewish cast of countenance. Nevertheless he was decidedly good-looking, if we can trust Dance's portrait of him. . . . He was shy and secretive, allowing no one to see him work, and sharp in all dealings where money was concerned. . . . Ill-educated and unpolished, very proud and very sensitive, conscious at once of his great talents and his social defects, he was always silent and suspicious, and often rough and surly, except with the few who had won his confidence."

His biographers are ready to attribute this lack of confidence to Turner's unfortunate love affair. When he was about twenty-one he fell in love with the sister of one of his Margate schoolfellows. His affection for the young woman was returned and they plighted their troth. While on one of his tours Turner either neglected to write or the letters were intercepted by the stepmother of the girl. The young lady thinking herself forsaken received the attentions of another suitor. The wedding-day was fixed, when Turner appeared asserting his claims and protesting his undying love. When the young lady decided to continue preparations for the wedding with lover number two, Turner departed, vowing that he had been unjustly treated and that he would remain a bachelor to the end of his days.

Turner lived until December 19, 1851, and was a prolific producer almost to the end of his years. Over nineteen thousand drawings and sketches were taken from his room after his death. By the terms of his will the English nation became the possessor of 362 pictures, 135 finished watercolors, and 1,757 studies in color, and sketches without number. Within very recent times the government has placed the Turner bequest in the Turner wing of the Tate Gallery, a branch of the National Gallery, although some pictures still remain in the National Gallery. The continued neglect of the English nation led Ruskin to say, "The nation buried Turner with threefold honor; Turner's body in St. Paul, his pictures at Charing-Cross, and his purposes in Chancery."

That last phrase has reference to the litigation that lasted for four years before the meaning of Turner's will was decided upon. His property had

a value of \$700,000. It is perhaps needless to say that the continued litigation frustrated the evident intentions of the artist, one of whose pet purposes was to endow a foundation for the assistance and support of "male decayed artists living in England."

Ш

When Turner was thirty-five years old, he was described as "with lobster-red face, twinkling, staring grey eyes, white tie, blue coat with brass buttons, crab-shell, turned-up boots, large fluffy hat and enormous umbrella." That he could be as rude in speech as he was eccentric in dress is illustrated by the following anecdote, which in spite of its suggestion of boorishness contains an element of grim humor.

Thomas of Duddington, a painter who was desirous of receiving the approbation of Turner, invited him to see his pictures. Turner looked them over carefully, scrutinizing them one by one, while Thomas followed him about waiting for the encouraging word of sympathetic criticism. At last Turner broke his long silence with but one comment, "You beat me in frames."

Many are the stories told of the peculiarities of this famous artist. He loved fame and he loved money, but stronger than his love of fame was his love of nature, and few who have been charged with love of money have made so generous a disposal of their all. Much as he loved money he parted with his pictures with great reluctance. Here is Mr. Thorn-bury's account of a variously related episode:

"We are told that one day Mr. Gillott, the wellknown manufacturer of Birmingham, sallied forth from his hotel, determined at any price to obtain admission to the enchanted house in Queen Anne Street. He was rich, he was enthusiastic - he believed strongly in the power of the golden key to open any door. He arrived at the blistered, dirty door of the house with the black-crusted windows. He pulled at the bell; the bell answered with a querulous, melancholy tinkle. There was a long inhospitable pause; then an old woman with a diseased face looked up from the area, and presently ascended and tardily opened the door, keeping the filthy chain up, however, as a precaution. She snappishly asked Mr. Gillott's business. He told her in his blandest voice.

"' Can't let 'e in,' was the answer, and she tried to slam the door.

"But during the parley the crafty and determined Dives had put his foot in, and now, refusing to any longer parley, he pushed past the feeble, enraged old she-Cerberus, and hurried upstairs to the gallery. In a moment Turner was out upon him like a spider on another spider who has invaded his web. Mr. Gillott bowed, introduced himself, and stated that he had come to buy.

"'Don't want to sell,' or some such rebuff, was the answer; but Gillott shut his ears to all Turner's angry vituperations.

"'Have you ever seen our Birmingham pictures,

Mr. Turner?' was his only remark.

"' Never 'eard of 'em,' said Turner.

"Gillott pulled from his pocket a silvery fragile bundle of Birmingham bank-notes (about £5000 worth).

"' Mere paper,' said Turner, with grim humor, a

little softened and enjoying the joke.

"'To be bartered for mere canvas,' said Gillott, waving his hand at the 'Building of Carthage,' and its companions.

"'You're a rum fellow!' said Turner, slowly entering into negotiations, which ended in Gillott eventually carrying off in his cab some five thousand

pounds' worth of Turner's pictures."

At another time a rich Liverpool merchant offered to give \$500,000 for the entire stock of paintings, drawings, and engravings in Turner's Queen Anne Street house. "Confident that his offer would be accepted he asked for the key of the house in order that he might forthwith cart off the valuables. But Turner said, 'No, sir; I have refused a similar offer before,' and well he might, for even then the stock was worth far more than that in the market, and in the hands of a monopolist might have realized any sum. 'I'll make it guineas,' was the seductive in-

vitation; but it was resolutely declined. He had willed the pictures to the nation. The week in which Turner sold a picture he invariably wore a look of dejection and oppression; and when pressed with inquiries as to the reason, he would sorrowfully exclaim, 'I've lost one of my children this week.'"

A strong test of a man's character is his attitude towards his fellowcraftsmen. Turner had none of the petty jealousy that is so often associated with the artistic temperament. When his picture of "Cologne" was hung between two portraits by Lawrence, the brightness of Turner's picture had a most injurious effect upon Lawrence's portraits. When Turner heard of the complaint of Lawrence, he turned the golden sky to a somber dullness. "Turner, Turner, what have you done to your picture?" cried an admiring friend who had led a group of critics up to the painting. "Oh," quietly replied Turner, "poor Lawrence was so unhappy! It's only lampblack. It'll all wash off after the exhibition."

In Hawthorne's story of "Wakefield" we have a sketch of an eccentric man who suddenly was seized with an impulse to secrete himself in lodgings but a short distance away from his home. His wife expected him to return, as he had been accustomed to leave on short business trips. Days went by, and then years, and his wife at last believed him to be dead. Turner mystified his friends in a somewhat

similar fashion. When he was an old man he took a home at Chelsea by the side of the river near Cremorne Gardens. This is the most popular explanation: "Requiring change of air for his health, Turner went to Chelsea in search of lodgings. These he found at a moderate cost at a little cottage not far from the present Battersea Bridge - which looked — and indeed still looks — on the river, and had a railed-in roof, from which he could observe sky effects. The landlady, seeing a little, thick-set, shabby man, asked him for 'reference'; which demand provoked the angry retort, 'My good woman, I'll buy the house outright.' Next she proposed to draw up an agreement, which he parried by exhibiting a roll of banknotes, and offering to pay in ad-This was most satisfying to his mystery-loving nature. Another difficulty, however, awaited him. The landlady wanted her proposed lodger's name; 'in case any gentleman should call, you know.' 'Name?' was the puzzled exclamation. 'What is your name?' 'My name is Mrs. Booth.' 'Then I'm Mr. Booth,' said Turner, and by that name he was known there. But unfortunately for the story, he did not carry about rolls of banknotes which he could flourish. All that was found in his pockets after his death was a solitary half-crown, black from its long seclusion in a grimy, unvisited pocket."

There are several traits in the character of this artist which we wish had been wanting: he was al-

most boorish in manners at times, and in his private life was coarse and sensual. What he needed was the refining influence of a good woman. On the other hand, he was generous on many occasions, not only in his praise of other artists but in his gifts of money to those who needed help. His relationship with his father was beautiful; he was tender-hearted, and kind to children.

IV

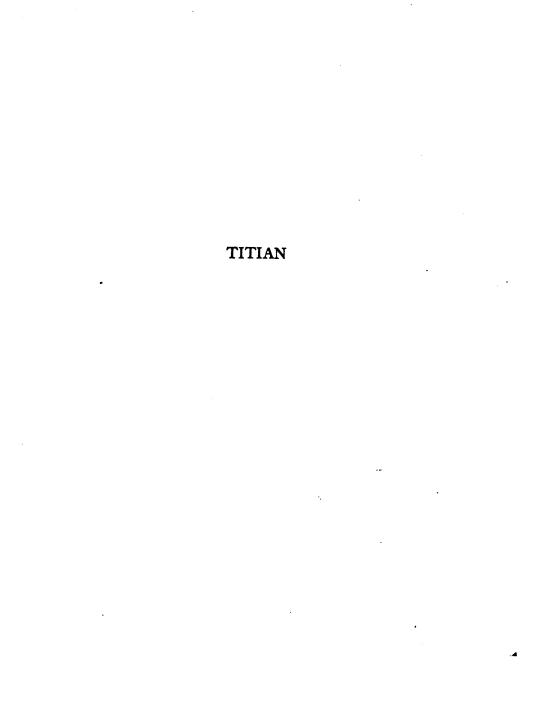
But the glory of Turner lies not in the details of his life but in the beauty of his art. Personally, I shall never forget the shock of charmed surprise I experienced when first I entered a large room filled with the glorious coloring of Turner's landscapes. His pictures have an individuality that is never forgotten. But little knowledge of art is needed to recognize a Turner, or a picture done in Turner's style. He belongs to the few who have the force of personality which bursts the bonds of convention. He is a pioneer. What Dryden said of Shakspere may be said of Turner, "He needed not the spectacles of books to read nature." With sketch book in hand he trudged over Europe absorbing beauty and sublimity wherever beauty and sublimity could be found. This man so mean and sordid and uncouth, at least so regarded by a conventional society. must have had an inner nature marvellously beautiful and magnanimous and imaginative, for how else

could he have seen the beautiful and sublime? The world without is but the reflection of the world within.

At first he was but a copyist, then an imitator. But there soon came a time when he became himself. "Suddenly he seems to have lifted his eyes from his paper," writes Mr. Walter Armstrong in a magazine article, "and fixed them finally on the shifting beauty of the world. Up to this time his thought has been given to the balance and truth of his results, but from henceforth he seems to live in the nature at which he gazes. In the process of digestion and selection he is now, and for the rest of his life, governed by a notion diametrically opposed to that of all great painters before him. He selects, rejects, and simplifies, as every painter must, but he does it on a principle that was new to art. He does it, not to enhance the unity of his picture, but to increase its comprehensiveness. His method is, not to remember the material limits of his instrument, and so to bring nature within its easy reach, but so to stretch and expand the powers of paint as to give hints, at least, of beauties which had never been put on canvas or paper before." To accomplish this requires "the eve of a hawk, a limitless memory, and a sensibility so deep as to be dangerous to its owner." All these characteristics were found in Turner. "He led the way from the grey fields, the solemn

seas and woods, of the old art to the jewelled color, the teeming distances, and palpitating sunshine of the new, but he left the conquest to be completed in a future which may never come."

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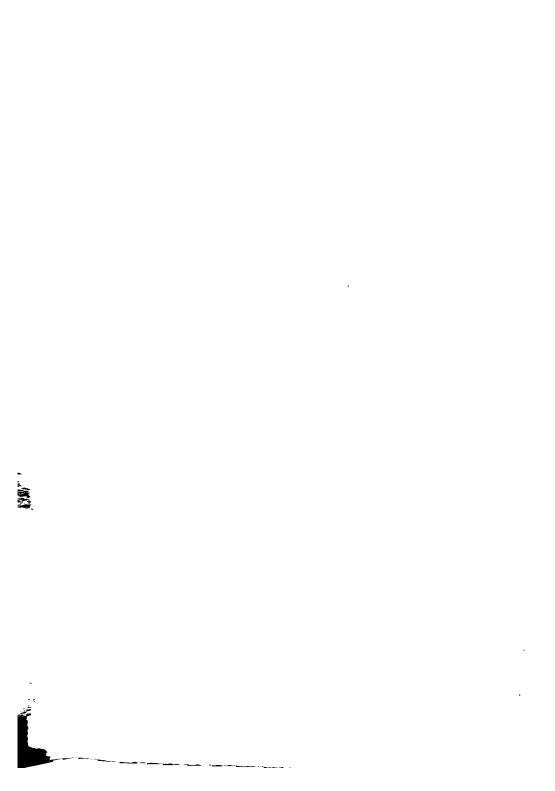


There are three Venetians that are never separated in my mind — Titian, Veronese, and Tintoret. They all have their unequalled gifts, and Tintoret especially has imagination and depth of soul which I think renders him undisputably the greatest man; but equally undisputably, Titian is the greatest painter, and therefore the greatest painter who ever lived.

RUSKIN.



THE ASSUMPTION OF THE VIRGIN Titian



TITIAN

1

Of the Venetian school of painters Titian stands foremost; he is also one of the greatest painters of the world, ranking with Raphael, Da Vinci, Rembrandt, Rubens, and Velasquez. "As heaven is the paradise of the soul, so God has transfused into Titian's colors the paradise of our bodies," savs a character in Sperone's Dialogue of Love. Minstrel, buffoon, warrior, prince, duke, and pope; courteous dames and damsels fair, daughters of princes and his own daughter Lavinia who was the joy of his heart; forms of nymphs and goddesses as well as saints and Biblical subjects,—all these passed before him to be immortalized by the gift of his genius. Today his pictures are scattered from St. Petersburg to Cincinnati; they are found in profusion in Venice, in Vienna, in Paris, in Madrid, and in Florence, and wherever found they give an impression of power ioined to restraint, of an imagination that could mount on eagles' wings, of keen sensibility to the delights of color, of a versatility that could turn from the painting of a "Venus Anadyomene" to the "Assumption of the Virgin" without impairing the charm

of the one or the solemnity of the other. When Browning was over threescore and ten he wrote some of his most tender love lyrics; when Titian was beyond ninety he painted the "Venus and Her Nymphs Equipping Cupid," now in the Borghese Gallery.

The life of Titian is without that romance so often attending the career of a great genius; his story lacks the pathos of Raphael, the thrilling violence of a Cellini, the solitary grandeur of a Michelangelo, the long struggle of a Millet. Titian's story, like Velasquez's, is the story of a prosperity continued through life, of the friendship of princes, popes, and emperors. His home, like that of the prosperous Sir Joshua Reynolds, became the center of influence. The Emperor Charles made him a count of the Lateran Palace. His children were also made noble, while Titian was made a Knight of the Golden Spur. When some of his courtiers objected to the Emperor's granting such honors to a mere painter, Charles replied, "We can create many counts, but God only can make a Titian."

II

For centuries it has been accepted that Titian died in his hundredth year, for did he not himself write to Philip II on August 1, 1571,—"I feel assured that Your Majesty's clemency will cause a careful consideration to be made of the services of an old servant of the age of ninety-five," and was he not born in 1477? And did he not die in 1576? Of late years with that skepticism that characterizes scholarship in the presence of the unusual, Mr. Herbert Cook has advanced arguments to show that Titian did not know how old he was; that he may have been born a dozen years later than 1477. But the case against the extreme old age of Titian has not yet been fully established, so we shall consider him as having lived up to his hundredth year.

About seventy miles due north of Venice is the little town of Pieve di Cadore. It is in the heart of the Dolomite Alps, in the midst of a most beautiful region of high mountain peaks, crystalline brooks, and picturesque dells. It is here that Titian first saw the light of day. Rugged and barren in its soil, the country was rich in beauty. It is easy to imagine that those beautiful landscapes that Titian loved to place in the background of his pictures were inspired by the magnificent scenery about Cadore. In after years he made an annual pilgrimage to his native town. There, in the words of Mr. Rose, "He witnessed the whole of her glorious pageant from the exquisite tones of the Adriatic, the lowlying marshes of the shore, the fertile plains gradually giving place to verdant foothills, and so to the mighty Dolomites with their riven peaks, their solemn forests and their waters, now rushing in foaming torrents, now spread out in bottomless lakes reflecting the mountains and the sky. He witnessed

every delightful or sublime aspect of nature, and he transferred them all to the canvas with equal skill."

About 1487 Titian went to Venice. Venice at this time was one of the most glorious cities in the world. Her navy was matchless in power, and her merchant marine returned from the far seas with the rich argosies of the Orient; for "the exhaustless East poured in her lap all gems in sparkling showers." She "sate in state, throned on her hundred isles," looking a "sea Cybele, fresh from ocean." Her marble palaces were bright in their fresh splendor; her canals re-echoed with the sound of many languages spoken by merchants from all lands.

With wealth comes art to beautify and adorn. The earliest art of Venice was greatly influenced by the Orient: its wonderful mosaics still attest the Byzantine influence. Its native genius was first expressed adequately in the work of the Bellini and in that of the little-known but rare Giorgione. When Titian came to Venice he was first placed in the studio of Zuccato, a skilled mosaicist; then he entered the studio of Gentile Bellini, and from there to the teaching of Giovanni Bellini, then the greatest painter in Venice and one of the best teachers in the world of art. In the same studio was Giorgione, a fellow learner with Titian, whose exquisite art must have had some influence on Titian. The "Sleeping Venus" of Giorgione, one of the most beautiful pictures ever painted, suggested the "Reposing Venus" of Titian. Titian painted the landscape background found in the picture of Giorgione. The two were friends and labored at first together in frescoing the outer walls of a great inn. A work which, owing to its exposure, has disappeared.

One of the early pictures by Titian is the celebrated "Sacred and Profane Love" in the Borghese at Rome. "A girl gorgeously dressed," writes Andrew Lang, "and beautiful in the style of Palma's ladies,

Sits with Love upon a woodside well,

or at least with an almost naked female figure, who holds in her right hand a little censer burning away with a magical effect into the blue and breathless air. A plucked rose and a lute lie beside the draped beauty, a little Cupid dips a wreath in the well water which flows into the grass from a pipe in the antique marble of the fountain; behind are rustic buildings and a tower, and plains sloping to the distant sea. The picture seems to represent the art of Palma and Giorgione blended in that of Titian, and the scene has a fresh loveliness and simplicity more delightful to some tastes than the richness of the 'Bacchus and Ariadne,' or the grandeur of the 'Peter Martyr.'"

This picture is a fine illustration of the vagaries of art interpretation. In a *Harper's Magazine* of 1877 I find an article on Titian in which the writer gravely tells us, "The two female figures present a

marked contrast. On one side of the fountain leans a graceful, well-developed country maiden, her figure slightly veiled by folds of muslin. Her whole attitude expresses innocent pleasure. She gazes over her shoulder in a pretty, careless way, as if half conscious of the presence of Cupid, who plays in the water behind her, but heedless of his allurements. At the other end of the fountain sits a haughty, serene woman, her charms veiled in a full robe of gray satin with scarlet trimmings. Her back is resolutely turned toward Cupid. She has played with the boy, and is weary of him and of all other sweet things." When this description was written the picture was entitled "Artless and Sated Love." The surprising point is that in one case the draped figure is "Sacred Love," and in the other "Sated Love."

Two other interpretations have been given: one by Professor Wykoff that the picture illustrates "Venus persuading Medea to fly with Jason;" the other that it is "Venus persuading Helen to fly with Paris."

III

Titian was the painter of dukes, princes, emperors, cardinals, and of a pope. The first of his eminent patrons, some of whom were princely in their generosity while others were niggardly, was Alfonso d'Este, Duke of Ferrara. For him was painted the "Tribute Money," now one of the treasures of the

Dresden Gallery. Some think that this is the greatest picture of Christ ever painted. "The nobility of the face," writes a critic, "has never been equalled. Its expression of gentle rebuke as he answers the cunning Pharisee is incomparable. No other picture of Titian's is finished with such care. Albert Dürer was then at Venice, and it is said that Titian painted the 'Tribute Money' to show that a minuteness of detail equal to Dürer's could be combined with a breadth of general effect such as was beyond the reach of the great German."

Titian also painted several portraits of Alfonso, and of Laura Dianti, who is believed to have been the second wife of Alfonso, a woman beautiful in appearance and charming in character. The "Bacchanal" now in the Prado, and the "Bacchus and Ariadne" in the National Gallery were painted for Alfonso. In 1523 Alfonso introduced another rich patron in the person of the Marquis of Mantua, the son of the accomplished Isabella d'Este. For him was painted the "Entombment," now in the Louvre. In 1533 Titian added to his list of princely patrons the great Charles V, for whom Titian painted variious portraits. The earliest of these is the one now in the Prado. It represents the Emperor in court dress, his hound by his side. It is "one of the marvels of art. The master has extenuated nothing. The insignificant figure, the homely face, disfigured by the projecting lower jaw, are there; yet none can

look at the picture without knowing that he is in the presence of the ruler of men." Charles paid the artist a thousand ducats for the picture and said no other should ever paint his portrait. Philip II of Spain was another distinguished patron. traits can now be found at Madrid, Naples, and One of the most celebrated was purchased in 1913 by Mrs. Emery for Cincinnati. rumored cost was £70,000. The portrait at one time belonged to Lenbach, the great German painter. Philip II was so delighted with Titian's work that he gave him four thousand ducats for the first portrait, the one now in the Prado. Later, after Titian had painted many of his religious and mythological subjects for him, Philip acted with miserly neglect.

Another distinguished subject for Titian's brush was Pope Paul III, a man of great force and ability, a patron of art and letters, the inspirer of the "Last Judgment" of Michelangelo, but of unsavory private character, and cursed in the possession of a son whose depravity was the scandal of his age. Another patron, not so distinguished as those just named, was the Duke of Urbino, a man who at seventeen had murdered his sister's lover, and at thirty publicly slain Cardinal Alidosi, a favorite of the Pope. He is described as an able soldier and an earnest and generous patron of art. It is said that twenty-five of Titian's masterpieces finally decorated the walls of Urbino's palace.

A friendship hard to explain is that of Titian's close relationship with Pietro Aretino, who was called the "Scourge of Princes." He is described as one of the most corrupt scamps that ever lived by the art of blackmail and sycophancy. Sensual, cunning, and brazen, he had the ability to possess himself of the secrets and vices of the great and the meanness and boldness to demand money for his If money was given, he wrote laudatory letters and sonnets; if money was not given, he published the shame of his victims to a gossip-loving He lived like a prince, entertaining lavishly and gathering about his board distinguished men and beautiful but frivolous women. He was able to appraise the value of a picture, and was a good advertiser of Titian's genius. He was charitable to the poor, and had the virtue of devotion to his daughters. Such was Pietro Aretino, whose "counterfeit presentment" can be seen in the Pitti at Florence, or in the P. and D. Colnaghi collection in London. The Pitti portrait is that of a man magnificently robed, evidently of large frame, with a face indicative of a massive strength.

IV

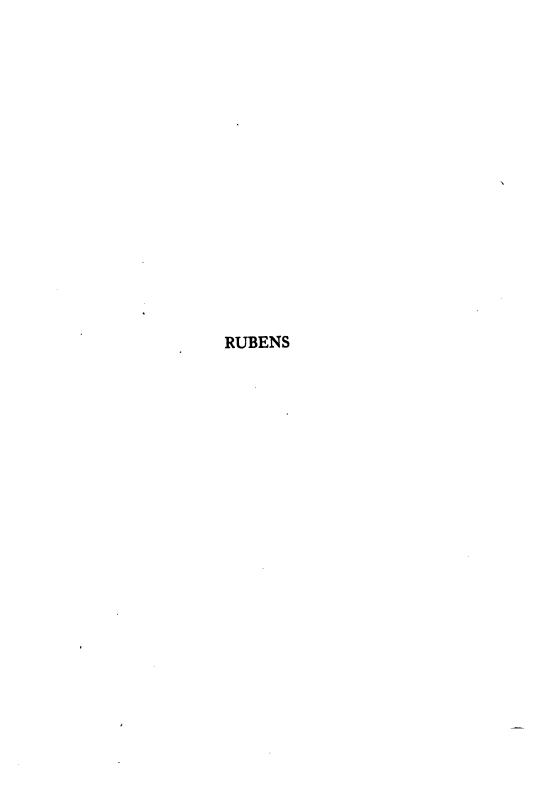
The most celebrated of all Titian's work is "The Assumption of the Virgin" in the Academy at Venice. It is a large picture, having a height of about twenty-one feet and a width of over ten feet. Its

date of composition is usually assigned to the years between 1516-1518. The central figure is the Virgin supported by clouds peopled with an innumerable host of cherubs. The three young girls in the right upper section are considered by some the most beautiful girl faces that were ever painted. The lower picture contains the Apostles looking up with agitated wonder, and the upper third depicts the Almighty in a flood of light welcoming the ascending Mother of Christ. Taine writes of this picture, "Venetian art centers in this work, and perhaps reaches its climax." Lafenestre thinks, "Never as yet had the genius of Venice, healthy, abounding, free, joyous, found such full vent." And Mr. Rose writes. "When we consider the majesty of the Virgin, the power of the Disciples, the beauty of the encircling angels, the glory of light and color, the perfect unity of the composition, it is apparent that we stand in the presence of one of the world's supreme masterpieces. . . . Some say that the Apostles are too agitated; but surely if agitation were ever excusable it would be when one loved to adoration was lifted from their midst and borne aloft amid the chanting of the angelic choir. It is said, too, that the Virgin is too mature. She must at this time have been past forty, and it would have been as inartistic as untrue to have a slender girlish figure as the center of this vast and powerful composition. Of course, like all

things human, the picture is not perfect, but there are few that approach closer to perfection."

"The greatest difficulty meets the critic who attempts to speak of Titian," writes John Addington Symonds in his Renaissance in Italy. "To seize the salient characteristics of an artist whose glory is to offer nothing over-prominent, and who keeps the middle path of perfection, is impossible. . . . In this work the world and men cease to be merely what they are; he makes them what they ought to be; and this he does by separating what is beautiful in sensuous life from its alloy of painful meditation and of burdensome endeavor. The disease of thought is unknown in his kingdom; no division exists between the spirit and the flesh: the will is thwarted by no obstacles. When we think of Titian, we are irresistibly led to think of music. His 'Assumption of the Madonna,' the greatest single oil-painting in the world, if we except Raphael's 'Madonna di San Siste,' can best be described as a symphony a symphony of color, where every hue is wrought into harmonious combination — a symphony of movement, where every line contributes to melodious rhythm — a symphony of light without a cloud — a symphony of joy in which the heavens and earth sing Hallelujah. . . . The grand manner can reach no further than in this picture — serene, composed, meditated, enduring, yet full of dramatic force and

profound feeling. Whatever Titian chose to touch, whether it was classical mythology or portrait, history or sacred subject, he treated in this large and healthful style. It is easy to tire of Veronese; it is possible to be fatigued by Tintoretto. Titian, like Nature, waits not for moods or humors in the spectator. He gives to the mind joy of which it can never weary, pleasures that cannot satiate, a satisfaction not to be repented of, a sweetness that will not pall. The least instructed and the simple feel his influence as strongly as the wise or learned."



As a colorist he may be called the painter of light, as Rembrandt is the painter of darkness. . . . The creative fancy of Rubens was capable of conceiving every possible variety of subject at all fitted for the pencil, and the sphere was indeed ample from which his remarkable cultivation of mind enabled him to select. . . . I have no hesitation in pronouncing him the greatest of all modern painters when he had to deal with subjects depending on the momentary expression of powerfully exalted passion which can only be firmly seized and developed in the imagination.

GUSTAV F. WAAGEN.



HELENE FOURMENT Rubens

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RUBENS

I

One of those descriptions that are tenderly impressive because of their universal appeal is Carlyle's account of his departure from home on the morning when he started on his long walk of about a hundred miles to the university at Edinburgh. He was but a mere boy, not yet fourteen. The mother and father walked with him and his young companion to the brow of the nearby hill and there with tremulous voice bade the youngsters Godspeed. Between the dour Scot who thundered out his convictions on man's duty and the urbane Flemish master who loved beauty, there may seem to be little in common. the incident from Carlyle's life springs to my mind when I think of the noble-hearted mother of Rubens, a woman of rare sympathy and force of character, who on May 9, 1600, saw her son Paul ride out of Antwerp on his trip to beautiful Italy, that Mecca of youthful artists. He was twenty-three years old and had studied art under local masters, but what he had already gained in technique served but as an incentive to gain more. So behold him breaking home ties, and almost breaking his mother's heart, as she

sees her handsome son disappear never to return to her sight. Did she have a premonition that this was to be her last glimpse of her talented son? If she had, she herself was too self-sacrificing to stay the ambition of her dutiful and loving Paul Peter. He remained in Italy year after year, until one day he heard that his mother, now seventy-two years of age, was sick. He hastened home to see her; but news traveled so slowly in those days that when he reached his destination he found that his mother had passed away five days before he had heard of her sickness.

II

Both Antwerp and Cologne have claimed the honor of being the birthplace of Rubens, Cologne even having a fine old mansion with a marble tablet containing an inscription informing the world that here was born the great painter, but the man who made an epoch in the history of art was born June 29, 1577, in Siegen, Westphalia, a city now having a population of 25,000, but in Rubens's day but a small town. Why Rubens himself died supposing Cologne to be his birthplace, is due to an episode in his father's career which reflects no credit upon the father, but reveals the wifely devotion of a noble woman.

Jan Rubens, the father, was a lawyer by profession, and at one time was an alderman in Antwerp. With the coming of the bloody Duke of Alva, wish-

ing to escape persecution, he moved his family across the frontier to Cologne. There he became the friend and then the lover of the frivolous wife of William the Silent, who, when hearing of their intrigue, imprisoned the handsome but foolish Jan, whose wrong-doing was punishable by death. For three weeks Jan's wife was distracted, not knowing what had become of her husband. Then upon receiving a penitent and remorseful letter from her erring husband she wrote him a noble letter of forgiveness, and then devoted herself to securing his release. The quality of the woman is revealed in this extract from one of her letters,—

"I am more than glad that, touched by my forgiveness, you feel now somewhat comforted. I did not imagine that you could ever think that I should make great difficulty in this matter, as indeed I have not done. How could I ever be so cruel as to add to your great distress and tribulation? On the contrary, I feel as if I could even give my own heart's blood to help you. Should I be like that most wicked servant in the Gospels, who, though all his own debt had been forgiven him, yet compelled his fellow-servant to pay him to the uttermost farthing? Let your mind be at rest as to my forgiveness; would to God that your freedom were dependent on it, so that we might soon be happy again. . . . I pray that God will hear my petition; so that they will spare and have mercy upon us; for it is certain that

should I hear the news of your death, I should die myself of a broken heart. . . . Now I recommend you to the Lord, for I can write no more, and I beg of you not to anticipate the worst: for that will anyhow come soon enough. To be always thinking of death and dreading death is worse than death itself. Therefore banish these thoughts from your heart. I hope and trust in God, that He may punish us more leniently, and that He may still give us both joy after all this grief. For this I beseech Him from the bottom of my heart, recommending you to the Almighty, that He may strengthen and comfort you with His Holy Spirit. I shall continually pray for you, and so also do our, little children, who send their love and who — God knows — long so much to see vou."

After two years of entreaties and threats, and finally by the payment of 6000 thalers, the faithful wife secured her husband's release with the restriction that he should live at Siegen. This, in brief, is the story of how Rubens happened to be born in Siegen, and explains why in later years the family never referred to their residence at Siegen, leaving Paul Peter under the impression that Cologne was his native city. Rubens died in ignorance of the Siegen episode.

III

The first city visited in Italy by Rubens was Venice, then in the summit of her glory and beauty.

There we may well imagine the resplendent art of Titian, who had died the year before Rubens was born, captivated the eye of the Fleming who had hitherto seen only the art of the North. Within two months after he had entered Italy he was invited to be the court painter of the Duke of Mantua, Vincenzo Gonzaga, a young man of twenty-eight, patron of art and athletic sports, fond of gambling and lavish entertainment, bigoted in religion and dissolute in living. For eight years Rubens remained in his service, but, strange to say, was able to withstand the pernicious influences with which he was usually surrounded.

With the Duke Rubens visited Florence, then far richer in its art collections than at present. Here the work of Michelangelo exerted a permanent influence upon his style. From Florence he went to Genoa, and then returned to Mantua. In August, 1601, Vincenzo sent him to Rome to copy for his palaces the masterpieces of the Eternal City. Rubens' later pictures of the "Last Judgment" show how profoundly his imagination was affected by Michelangelo's great decoration in the Sistine Chapel. So highly esteemed was Rubens for his courtliness and ability that the Duke sent him on an embassy to Philip III of Spain. Vincenzo wished to have the good will of the son of Philip II, so he sent him a present of fine horses and a gilded coach. There were also copies of masterpieces and

other presents for the functionaries about the court of Philip. It was the mission of Rubens to see that these gifts were properly presented. It was not on this visit to Spain that he was associated with Velasquez. That occurred later, as Velasquez was but a child of three or four at this time. After a year's stay in Spain he returned to Mantua in 1604. Then he went to Rome, especially eager to go because his brother Philip had been appointed librarian to Cardinal Ascanio Colonna, and remained there for two years.

This brief account of the years in Italy helps to explain why Rubens is one of the most widely educated painters in the history of art. He was born on German soil and learned German in Cologne. At Antwerp he learned Flemish and Dutch and French. In Spain he learned Spanish, and during these eight years in Italy he became so proficient in Italian that he could use it as his mother tongue. In his schooldays he had learned Latin, and later in life, when flourishing as a successful painter, he added English to his linguistic accomplishments.

When Rubens came back to Antwerp he was known as a skillful painter and an agreeable man of the world; he had painted many pictures, religious decorations for churches, portraits, and mythological characters, but he had not yet achieved a masterpiece, although when Guido Reni saw a painting by Rubens he is reported to have said, "This

man surely mixes his colors with blood." But Rubens is a man who matured slowly; his preeminence is due to his capacity for growth; his history is not the story of a man who leaped into an unexpected fame, but of one who gradually mastered the technique of his art by years of patient study and practice until his hand could execute whatever his mind conceived. Had his mind had the refinement that comes with deep spirituality, and his imagination been controlled by the Greek quality of moderation, he might have developed into the greatest painter the world has ever known.

IV

The career of Rubens after his return to Antwerp is one of uninterrupted prosperity. The amount of work he accomplished is almost incredible. In Munich alone there are ninety-five paintings from his hand; after his death there were catalogued 4000 pictures and sketches, of which about 1200 were paintings. In this connection it must be explained that in many cases Rubens did but a small part of the work. In his studio were dozens of talented young students who adored their accomplished, urbane, and successful master. It was a great privilege to be admitted into his atelier. When Rubens was in the height of his busy, prosperous life, with more commissions than he could fulfil if he were to do all the work, he sketched the

plan of the picture, perhaps filled in the principal figure, and then told his disciples to finish the painting. But so scrupulous was this Fleming that he always told a would-be purchaser whether he himself had painted all of the picture or whether his pupils had had a hand in the work. One of the pupils, the most brilliant in fact, was Van Dyck, to whom Rubens' entrusted some of the most difficult of his tasks.

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In 1609, when Rubens was thirty-two, he married Isabella Brant, a niece of his brother Philip's wife. Isabella was a young girl of eighteen who developed into a most excellent wife. One of the most pleasing portraits we have is that of "Rubens and his wife Isabella Brant" in the Pinakothek in Munich. She is seated at his feet, her hand in his. She died in 1626. In December, four years later, Rubens married Helene Fourment, a young girl of sixteen whom he passionately loved. She appears and reappears in dozens of his painting, sometimes as a sedate matron, sometimes as a Venus, sometimes as a bacchante. One sometimes questions the good taste of the artist with reference to his use of his wife as a model, but all testimony asserts that in all other respects he was a most considerate husband and father.

There is a strange contrast between the art of Rubens and his life. When looking at some of his pictures one is frequently offended by the coarseness of his forms; his exuberant women, reveling bacchantes, lustful fauns, and tipsy Silenuses leave an impression of uncouth vitality rather than of satisfying beauty. Violence is not energy, nor is a riotous exuberance the last word in art. "He had not learned," writes Mary Innes, "that the subtlest and most precious of all the gifts bestowed upon the artist is the gift of moderation." From all this, one might gather the impression that Rubens was a gay Lothario with a dash of Falstaff in his veins. But Rubens was a model husband, a devoted father, a hard worker, and a most worthy citizen. If the art of living is finer than the art of painting, we may say that Rubens, great as he was as a painter, was still greater as a man.

So prosperous and so well did he manage his business affairs that he became one of the wealthiest men of his city. His home was the center of art and learning. His collection of Italian pictures included nineteen pictures by Titian, seventeen by Tintoretto, seven by Paul Veronese, four by Raphael, twenty-two by Bassano, and many more by lesser known artists. His library grew to such an extent that he constructed a special building for his vast collection of books.

He was a hard worker and planned systematically the ordering of his life. "He arose early, De Piles says, at four o'clock, which seems improbable, heard mass, breakfasted with continental simplicity,

and painted until noon, when he dined with his family. Then he went back to work, and painted until five; at which hour he mounted one of his magnificent Andalusian horses, and rode out into the country. At supper, which was simple, he generally had guests. His conversation was delightful, but serious. Gossip and frivolity were ignored. His friends were men chosen for their culture and wisdom, who had much to say that was worth while and knew how to say it; and no matter what their language might be, the master of the house could converse with them in their own tongue, or could join them in Latin, then the universal language of the learned. His voice was remarkably pleasant. He spoke fluently, but with calmness and selfrestraint." * Such was the orderly life of the genius who in his capacity as an artist broke all the conventions and let his impetuous imagination run riot in the representation of all forms of life.

However, at this point we ought to read Ruskin's defence of that phase of the art of Rubens which repels by its grossness,—'A man long trained to love the monk's vision of Fra Angelico turns in proud and ineffable disgust from the first work of Rubens. . . . But is he right in his indignation? He has forgotten that, while Angelico prayed and wept in his olive shade, there was different work doing in the dank fields of Flanders:—wild seas

[•] G. B. Rose, The World's Leading Painters.

to be banked out; . . . much hardening of hands, and gross stoutening of bodies in all this; gross jovialities of harvest homes, and Christmas feasts; ... rough affections, and sluggish imaginations; fleshy, substantial, iron-shod humanities, but humanities still,—humanities which God had his eye upon, and which won perhaps, here and there, as much favor in his sight, as the wasted aspects of the whispering monks of Florence. . . . And are we to suppose there is no nobility in Rubens' masculine and universal sympathy with all this, and with his large human rendering of it? . . . He had his faults,—though more those of his time and country than his own; he has neither cloister-breeding nor boudoir-breeding, and is very misfit to paint either in missals or annuals; but he has an open sky and wide-world breeding in him that we may not be offended with, fit alike for king's court, knight's camp, or peasant's cottage."

V

The most widely known of the hundreds of paintings by Rubens is the "Descent from the Cross" in the Antwerp Museum. There are many connoisseurs who deny that it is preëminently the masterpiece of his art, but few would deny that it is the most famous of his productions. One critic has enthusiastically declared that it is the grandest picture in the world for composition, drawing, and

coloring. Others have found fault with its bustle and "the dreadfully true delineation of merely physical agony - too terrible, real, picturesque, but not sublime — an earthly tragedy, not a divine mystery." Timothy Cole has observed that all photographs and engravings have a hardness and roughness of workmanship because they have been reproduced, not from the great painting itself, but from an original sketch which lends itself to reproduction more readily than the painting itself. His own opinion is that the picture "is a touching and impressive work, profound and tender in sentiment. Savior is being lowered from the cross into the arms of loving friends by means of a sheet. The value of the naked body against the sheet, in full light and relieved against a dark sky, is one of the most striking and effective things in art. The draperies of the others, in their rich and varied coloring, are subdued to their faintest note, so that the faces come out with wonderful relief, and the eye naturally dwells upon the various emotions depicted in each, from the weeping countenance of the Virgin, as pale as the body of her Son, to the visage of her dead Lord, calm in the repose of death, and, finally, to the lovely features of the Magdalene, whose bloom of health and youth, emphasizing the pallor of death, is the culminating note of color in the whole." And John La Farge calls attention to the marvellous adjustments of planes and lines so that every detail "helps to form a pattern as ingeniously combined as that of any ornamentation or brocade, meant merely for the soothing of the eye. But none of these subtleties is insisted upon to the detriment of the dramatic story."

Rubens died on the 30th of May, 1640, universally mourned. The Abbe of St. Germain, thinking of the many wonderfully sacred pictures the artist had given the world, beautifully said, "He has gone to behold in heaven the living originals of his paintings."



COROT

And only the Master shall praise us, and only the Master shall blame;

And no one shall work for money, and no one shall work for fame;

But each for the joy of the working, and each in his separate star,

Shall draw the thing as he sees It for the God of Things as They Are!

KIPLING.



THE DANCE OF THE NYMPHS
Corot



COROT

T

Rousseau, the French landscape painter, used to wish he were a millionaire so that he could spend all his time in painting one fine picture; Corot never was a millionaire but he spent his whole life in doing what he wanted most to do — paint pictures.

No; Corot did not spend all the years of his life in doing what he liked; up to his twenty-sixth year his practical father was trying to make his son a lover of business, but the son's eyes were with his heart and that was fixed on art instead of francs. Seeing that Camille's life would be a failure unless he renounced Art and all its evil fascination, Corot, Sr. tried to tempt his grown-up son by holding out the prospects of a fine career in money-making. However, Camille may do as he pleases, but he must do one or the other — go into business with a man's purpose or choose art and give up hope of ever becoming rich. "The dowries of your sisters," said the father, "have been ready for them, and I expect very soon to provide you also with a good establishment; for you will speedily be of an age to be the head of a business house: but, since you

have refused to continue in your trade, in order to become a painter, I forewarn you that, while I live, you will have no capital at your disposal. I will give you an allowance of fifteen hundred francs. Never count upon anything else, and see if you can get along with that." No speech could have pleased Camille more. He at once affectionately embraced his father, saying, "I thank you; it is all that I need, and you make me very happy." The son with light heart went down to the banks of the Seine, near by the father's house, and, "looking toward the Cité, full of joy, began to paint." And for about thirty years he lived on his allowance of three hundred dollars, dutifully paid by the doubting father who was with difficulty made to see finally that, in losing the crow of business, society had caught the lark of art.

Now Corot was started on his career. We can imagine the exhilaration of this child of nature, this care-free son of the thrifty Frenchman, as he begins his work, the work which turns to play because his heart is in it. Thirty-five years afterwards he said to several of his friends who were looking at that first sketch drawn on the shores of the Seine: "While I was doing that, thirty-five years ago, the young girls who worked at my mother's were curious to see Monsieur Camille at his new employment, and ran away from the store to come and look at him. One of them whom we will call Mademoiselle

Rose, came oftener than her companions; she is still living and unmarried, and visits me from time to time. She was here only last week. Oh, my friends, what a change, and what reflections it calls forth. My painting has not budged, it is as young as ever, it marks the hour and time of day when I made it; but Mademoiselle Rose and I, where are we?"

Ħ

His life was as sincere and unaffected as his art is beautiful. Jean Baptiste Camille was born in Paris in 1796. His father had been a hair-dresser, but marrying a milliner, he devoted himself to her business so shrewdly that together they laid by a snug little fortune. For ten years Camille attended school at Rouen. Then he was placed in the shop of a draper, as the English say, or as we have it, in the store of a dry-goods merchant. Here he "put in the time" for eight years. Then came the incident which we have already related. He studied under Michallon and Victor Bertin; under the latter he learned to draw accurately and have a sense of style in composition.

In 1825 we find him in Rome where at first his gay and social disposition attracted more notice than his ability as an artist. Then one day, as he was sitting on the Palatine Hill and sketching the Colosseum, he was observed by Aligny, a comrade who

was considered an authority in landscape. Aligny was so impressed by what he saw that in the evening he told his comrades that Corot was going to be master of them all. This the modest Corot at first took for pleasantry, but his comrades had a new respect for the big and sunshiny Frenchman, and Corot later looked upon this incident as a turning point in his life. He never parted with that study of the Colosseum.

In 1827 he returned to France and sent two pictures to the Salon, and thereafter to his death in 1875 never missed an exhibition. In later years he twice visited Italy; once he went to England; besides this he travelled much in Switzerland and France. But travels form a small part in the life of Corot. Like Thoreau, who when asked whether he had travelled much replied, "Yes, around Concord;" so Corot might have answered that his principal traveling was done around the Ville d'Avray.

Corot was sixty before the public bought his pictures. Before this the artists were loud in their praises and critics saw merit in his work. It was the hardest for the father to believe that there was any merit in the work of this son who had chosen what he considered a foolish career.

"Tell me," he said to one of Corot's companions, "has Camille actually any talent?" He was not persuaded that "he was the best of us all," but he doubled his allowance from three to six hundred dollars.

Corot is not to be pitied. He was doing what he wanted to do, and was the happiest man in the world. If his pictures did not sell, then he had them all the longer for his own enjoyment. When at last one was sold, he cried in mock despair, "Alas! my collection has been so long complete, and now it is broken!" He had a proper respect for the value of his pictures; the public could do as it pleased about buying, but he was not going to degrade himself or his art by placing a low price on what he had lovingly wrought out. "It is worth such and such a sum; but no one will give that, and I will not sell it for less. I can give my things away if I see fit, but I cannot degrade my art by selling them below their value." At one time he placed a price of ten thousand francs on a picture; it was sold. He was so astonished that he wrote to the secretary of the Salon saying that he must have dropped a zero in marking the figures.

After Corot had become famous he said, "What an astonishing thing it is for me to find myself to-day an interesting man! What a pity that it was not told sooner to my father, who had such a grudge against my painting and who did not find anything good therein because I did not sell them." What would be the surprise of the father to-day if he could learn that a single picture of his son's would sell

for more than the value of his entire millinery shop on the Rue de Bac.

When the Grand Medal of Honor was not given to Corot in 1874, his friends decided to give him a gold medal by public subscription. A dinner was given at the Grand Hotel on the 29th of December. Three or four hundred friends and admirers greeted the master with affectionate regard. Corot, whose health had declined since the recent death of his sister with whom he had lived, was deeply moved by this evidence of loving esteem. "One is very happy to feel one's self loved like that," he whispered to the presiding officer.

He was nearing the end of a singularly fortunate and happy life. Calling his pupil Français to his side he said, a few days before his death,—"See, I have almost arrived at resignation, but it is not easy, and I have been striving for it a long time. Nevertheless, I have no reason to complain of my lot—quite the contrary. I have had good health for seventy-eight years, and have been able to do nothing but paint for fifty. My family were honest folk. I have had good friends and think I never did harm to any one. My lot in life has been excellent. Far from reproaching fate, I can only be grateful. I must go—I know it; but don't want to believe it. In spite of myself there is a little bit of hope left in me."

Paris crowded to the church where his funeral

was held; Fauré sang the air selected by Corot himself,—the slow movement from Beethoven's seventh symphony. The Director of the Beaux Arts at the open grave fittingly and beautifully said,—"All the youth of Paris loved him, for he loved youth, and his talent was youth eternally new. . . . And in his immortal works he praised God in his skies and birds and trees."

We are told that as the last phrase was uttered "a linnet perched on a branch near by and burst into a gush of song; and when in 1880 a monument to the beloved great painter who talked so often of mes feuilles et mes petits oiseaux' was set up by his brethren on the border of the little lake at Ville d'Avray, the sculptor carved on it the branch and the singing bird."

III

It is pleasant to think of the generosity of this big, herculean, healthy, gentle-spirited man. In his younger days, when nine o'clock came, he left whatever company he may have been enjoying in order to go to his mother, la belle dame, as he was fond of calling her. In his latter days he was "Papa Corot" to the younger generation of Parisian artists, to many of whom he had given more substantial aid than advice. When Honoré Daumier, the artist, had become blind, and it was said the landlord was about to drive him out of his home, Corot

purchased the villa and sent the title deeds to Daumier with the message,—"This time I defy your proprietor to put you out of doors." To which Daumier replied,—"You are the only man I esteem enough to be able to accept from him anything without blushing." When he learned that a little peasant girl of whom he had made a sketch had been drowned he carried the sketch to the father, saying as he gave it, "Here is your daughter come back." One can appreciate what this meant to the father, who never allowed the picture to be loaned to an exhibition or to be seen by any one but himself, and directed in his will that it be laid on his heart when he took his final rest in his tomb.

With all his giving, as might be expected, he was modest and simple-hearted. "I would rather give to ten who are undeserving than deny a single one who is in want," he would say. In regard to his giving he once said, "It's nothing, it's my temperament and my happiness. . . . Once I gave away a thousand francs; that was all my pocket could stand for the moment. The next day I sold paintings for six thousand francs. You see that the thing had brought me good fortune, and it's always so." Are we surprised that Burty should say of him that he was perhaps the most loved of all the painters of his generation?

All know about the generous and lovable Corot, but it is not so generally known that this painter

was also a most industrious worker. M. G. van Rensselear writing in the Century calls attention to the range and industry of Corot —" Every one knows that Corot was a landscape painter with an especial love for the neighborhoods of Ville d'Avray and for effects of springtime and early morning or evening light. But it is a great mistake to think of him as confined to such effects, or even as narrowly devoted to landscape painting. He painted all hours of the day and now and then moonlight too, and all seasons of the year save those when snow lies on the ground. Figures enliven nearly all his landscapes. Sometimes they are peasants laboring in wood or field; more often classic nymphs or dancers in surroundings that reveal his memories of southern scenes; and occasionally the characters of some antique fable. . . . Nothing he produced is more remarkable than the 'St. Sebastian' now in Baltimore; and he often drew upon the life of Christ and the stories of the Old Testament. He also painted flowers and still-life subjects and interiors: many street and distant city views; animals; large draped figures and studies of the nude; and no less than forty portraits. . . .

"If ever a man worked hard at his art it was Corot. The number of his preparatory studies was immense, and they were made in his latest as well as his earliest years. 'Conscience' was his watchword, the nickname his scholars gave him, the one

recipe he gave them when they asked him how to learn to paint. The first thing to produce, said he, were 'studies in submission;' later came the time for studies in picture-making. . . . His whole life was given to work, and his whole work was an effort to see nature with more and more fidelity. A gray-haired man, a master among his fellows, a poet before the world, he was to the end a child at the great mother's knee; and to the end a conscientious, often a despairing, aspirant when he had a brush in hand."

Mr. R. A. M. Stevenson, the art critic and biographer of Velasquez, thinks that Corot did for trees what Velasquez did for men. The Spanish portrait painter painted men in their various walks and conditions of life. "The French landscape painter showed the tree in its true essence, and in its true position amid skies, verdure, water, and rocks or waving grasses." After calling attention to Corot's own observation that the birds could fly through his trees without falling down dead, as if they had blown against painted tin, the British critic continues,—

"But it took him, as it took Velasquez, years of study to realize his impressions of the large aspect of nature; it took him years of study and a thousand half-failures to imagine the technical devices that enabled him to give relief to his idea. The grain of the canvas, the fluidity of the vehicle, the use of

impasto, the flick into wet paint, the retouched scrape, the quick upward drag of the rigger, the smudged texture — all these things had to be considered and practised before the finest Corots were produced. Corot generally uses a toile fine of small but sharp grain — that is, a canvas with a good 'tooth' on it, and very little preparation. this he smudged in very thinly his main masses of tine, modelling them loosely and broadly. worked into this wet paint darker and light spots of detail, and, finally, his last exquisite touches of This was one of his ways of working; but sometimes he laid in the whole canvas thickly and heavily, and then, before finishing, he scraped the thing down to a thin ghost of itself. In either case the thin underlay was of the tone required so that there is not much chance of his pictures changing color more than all paint must. A third kind of Corot is painted thickly all through, and straight ahead after the style of Millet, and most Frenchmen of the time. In some others you will see a mixture of two of these processes; and that kind of Corot is very common."

IV

Every one who writes about Corot quotes his letter to Monsieur Graham. Here it is with the freshness of Nature itself and the simplicity of the sweetspirited artist:

"Look you, it is charming, the day of a landscapist. He rises early, at three in the morning, before the sun; he goes and seats himself at the foot of a tree. He watches and waits. There is not much to be seen at first. Nature resembles a whitish canvas upon which the profiles of certain masses are vaguely sketched; all is fragrant, all thrills under the refreshing breath of the dawn.

"Bing! the sun is becoming clear—the sun has not yet rent the gauze behind which hide the meadow, the valley, the hills of the horizon—the vapors of night still creep like silvery tufts over the cold green grass.

"Bing! Bing! a first ray of the sun! a second ray of the sun! The tiny flowerets seem to awake joyous; each one has its drop of trembling dew; the leaves, sensitive to the cold, move to and fro in the morning air — under the foliage the birds sing unseen — it seems as if it were the flowers saying their prayers. The loves, on wings of butterflies, descend upon the meadow and make the tall grasses sway to and fro. One sees nothing — everything is there — the landscape is all there behind the transparent gauze of the mist, which rises, rises, inhaled by the sun, and discloses in rising the river scaled with silver, the meadows, the trees, the cottages, the vanishing distance. One distinguishes at last what one divined at first.

"Bam! the sun has risen. Bam! the peasant

passes at the end of the field with his cart drawn by two oxen.

"Ding! ding! it's the bell of the ram that leads the flock.

"Bam! Bam! all bursts — all glitters — all is in full light, blond and caressing as yet. . . . A countryman, mounted upon a white horse, disappears in the hollow path; the little rounded willows seem to be spreading themselves like peacocks upon the bank of the river. It is adorable, and I paint — and I paint — Oh! the beautiful fawn-colored cow, sunk up to her dew-law in the damp grass; I am going to paint her — crac! there she is! Famous, famous! Dieu, how well I've hit her off! Let's see what that peasant will say who is watching me paint and does not dare to approach.

"'Ho, Simon!' Good; here is Simon approach-

ing and looking.

"'Well, Simon, what do you think of that?'

"'Oh, well, Monsieur, it's very beautiful, of course.'

"'And you see well what I meant to paint?'

"'Why, of course, I see what it is; it's a large

yellow rock you've put there.'

"Boom! boom! boom! the sun aflame burns the earth. Boom! everything grows heavy, everything becomes serious — the flowers hang their heads, the birds are silent, the sounds of the village come to us; they are the heavy labors, the smith whose hammer

resounds upon the anvil. Boom! let us return home — one sees everything; there is nothing there longer. Let us go and breakfast at the farm, a good slice of home-made bread, with butter freshly churned — eggs — cream — ham — Boom! Work, my friends, if you will; I rest, I take my noon nap — and I dream a morning landscape — I dream my picture — by and by I will paint my dream.

"Bam! Bam! The sun sinks towards the horizon—it is time to return to work. Bam! the sun gives a blow of tam-tam. Bam! it sets amidst an explosion of yellow, of orange, of fire red, of cherry, of purple,—Ah, it's pretentious and vulgar; I don't like that—Wait; let's sit down there at the foot of the poplar—close to that pond, as smooth as a mirror.

"Nature has a tired mien — the flowerets seem to revive a little — poor flowerets, they are not like the rest of us men, who find fault with everything. . . . They are thirsty — they wait. They know that the sylphs of the evening are going to sprinkle them with vapor from their invisible watering pots; they wait in patience, giving thanks to God.

"But the sun sinks more and more behind the horizon. Bam! Bam! it casts its last ray, a smoke of gold and purple which fringes the fleeing cloud. Now then see! it has altogether disappeared! Good! Good! the twilight begins.

"Dieu, how charming it is! The sun has dis-

appeared — there remains in the softened sky only a vaporous tint of pale lemon. . . . The fields lose their color — the trees only form brown or gray masses — the darkened waters reflect the soft tones of the sky — one begins to see nothing more — one feels that everything is there - all is vague, confused. Nature is falling asleep - yet the fresh air of the evening sighs among the leaves; the birds, those voices of the flowers, repeat the evening prayer — the dew strews with pearls the velvet of the lawn — the nymphs flee, hide themselves — and desire to be seen. Bing! a star of heaven plunges head foremost into the pond. Charming star, whose scintillation the trembling of the water increases; you are looking at me - you are smiling at me and winking too - Bing! a second star appears in the water, a second eye opens. Welcome, fresh and smiling stars. Bing! bing! bing! three, six, twenty stars, all the stars of heaven have given each other a tryst in that blessed pond. All grows still darker — only the pond scintillates — it is a swarming of stars. The illusion is produced — The sun having hidden itself, the inner sun of the soul, the sun of art rises — Bon! Voila mon tableau fait!"

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You speak a name

That always thrills me with a noble sound,
As of a trumpet! 'Michael Angelo!
A lion all men fear and none can tame;
A man that all men honor, and the model
That all should follow; one who works and prays,
For work is prayer, and consecrates, his life
To the sublime ideal of his art,
Till art and life are one; a man who holds
Such place in all men's thoughts, that when they
speak
Of great things done, or to be done, his name

Of great things done, or to be done, his name Is ever on their lips.

LONGFELLOW in Michael Angelo.

MICHELANGELO

T

Terribilità is the Italian word one frequently meets in a study of the life of this great artist; his is a personality that overwhelms by the force of genius; one is almost oppressed in trying to sound the depths of this Titan whose product is Prome-"There are four men." writes Taine, "in the world of art and of literature exalted above all others, and to such a degree as to seem to belong to another race; namely, Dante, Shakespeare, Beethoven, and Michelangelo." Raphael charms us with his sweetness and grace; Rubens attracts by the appeal of form and color; Millet interprets the pathos of the commonplace: but Michelangelo awes by the godlike sweep of his imagination; he is the Shakspere of art, not the genial Shakspere of comedy, but the Shakspere of King Lear.

At twenty-four he chiseled the "Pietà," at twenty-seven the "David"; at thirty-seven he began the monument for Julius; at thirty-seven he finished the vault of the Sistine Chapel; at forty he is making the façade of the Church of San Lorenzo; at fifty he is working in Florence on the Medicean tombs;

at fifty-four he is superintending the building of the fortifications of S. Miniato, to defend the fair city of Florence against his former patrons, the Medici; at sixty he is appointed chief architect, sculptor, and painter at the Vatican, and at sixty-six he completed the "Last Judgment"; at seventy-one he is made architect of St. Peter's and is working vigorously until his death in 1564, in his eighty-ninth year. This is the brief outline of the acts of a comprehensive genius. He did a thousand and one lesser deeds. And what he did is but a small part of what he conceived. Well was it said by Vittoria Colonna, "What was in Michelangelo's work was as little beside what was in his soul."

Michelangelo's decoration of the Sistine Chapel is the work that entitles him to a place among the great painters of the world. The designing and painting of this work, including interruptions and years of intermission, covered a period of many years, probably from 1508 to 1541. The painting of the vault occupied only four and one-half years. And it is likely that the "Last Judgment" was not begun before 1536.

The Sistine Chapel is "a simple barn-like chamber" connected with the Vatican. It is 132 feet long, 42 feet wide, and 68 feet high. The ceiling has an "expansive flattened vault with a central portion well adapted to fresco decoration." Each side of the chamber has six windows, while the

closed eastern and western ends of the chamber have large flat walls. Before Michelangelo began his work several painters had already contributed their portions to the decoration of the walls of the Sistine. Perugino, Sandro Botticelli, Ghirlandajo, and others had embellished the chamber with the history of Moses and the life of Jesus, and Botticelli had placed there the portraits of twenty-eight of the Popes. These portraits still remain, but Perugino's three frescoes on the western wall were effaced to make room for the "Last Judgment."

After giving a detailed account of the various figures and subjects of this masterpiece, Mr. Symonds concludes, "Thus with a profound knowledge of the Bible, and with an intense feeling for religious symbolism, Michelangelo unrolled the history of the creation of the world and man, the entrance of sin into the human heart, the punishment of sin by water, and the reappearance of sin in Noah's family. Having done this, he intimated, by means of four special mercies granted to the Jewish people — types and symbols of God's indulgence — that a Savior would arise to redeem the erring human race. confirmation of this promise, he called twelve potent witnesses, seven of the Hebrew prophets and five of the Pagan sibvls. He made appeal to history. and set, around the thrones on which these witnesses are seated, scenes detached from the actual lives of our Lord's human ancestors.

"The intellectual power of this conception is at least equal to the majesty and sublime strength of its artistic presentation. An awful sense of coming doom and merited damnation hangs in the thunderous canopy of the Sistine vault, tempered by a solemn and sober expectation of the Savior. It is much to be regretted that Christ, the Desired of all Nations, the Redeemer and Atoner, appears nowhere adequately represented in the Chapel. When Michelangelo resumed his work there, it was to portray Him as an angered Hercules, hurling curses upon helpless victims. The august rhetoric of the ceiling loses its effective value when we can nowhere point to Christ's life and work on earth; when there is no picture of the Nativity; none of the Crucifixion, none of the Resurrection. . . . In spite of Buonarroti's great creative strength, and injuriously to his real feeling as a Christian, the piece-meal production which governs all large art undertakings results here in a maimed and one-sided rendering of what theologians call the Scheme of Salvation."

After many years of intermission Michelangelo resumed his decoration of the Chapel by beginning his "Last Judgment." About 1536 the work of embellishing the west end of the Chapel was begun; it must have been finished before Christmas Day, 1541, for on that day the doors of the Chapel were thrown open to the public, who then had an op-

portunity of seeing a work which at once created a profound impression.

The "Last Judgment" is not a beautiful picture; it is a terrible picture. Enormous in size, it is gigantic in its forceful horror. "The cross and whipping-post," writes Mr. Symonds, "are the chief emblems of Christ's Passion. The crown of thorns is also there, the sponge, the ladder, and the nails. It is with no merciful intent that these signs of our Lord's suffering are thus exhibited. Demonic angels, tumbling on clouds like Leviathans, hurl them to and fro in brutal wrath above the crowd of souls, as though to demonstrate the justice of damnation. In spite of God's pain and shameful death, mankind has gone on sinning. The Judge is what the crimes of the world and Italy have made him. Immediately below the corbel, and well detached from the squadrons of attendant saints, Christ rises from His throne. His face is turned in the direction of the damned; His right hand is lifted as though loaded with thunderbolts for their annihilation. He is a ponderous young athlete . . . with the features of a vulgarised Apollo. . . . It is singular that, while Michelangelo depicted so many attitudes of expectation, eagerness, anxiety, and astonishment in the blest, he has given to none of them the expression of gratitude, or love, or sympathy, or shrinking awe. Men and women, old and young alike, are human beings of Herculean

build. Paradise, according to Buonarroti's conception, was not meant for what is graceful, lovely, original, and tender. The hosts of heaven are adult and over-developed gymnasts. Yet, while we record these impressions, it would be unfair to neglect the spiritual beauty of some souls embracing after long separation in the grave, with folding arms, and clasping hands, and clinging lips. While painting these, Michelangelo thought peradventure of his father and his brother.

"As a collection of athletic nudes in all conceivable postures of rest and action, of fore-shortening, of suggested movement, the 'Last Judgment' remains a stupendous miracle. Nor has the aged master lost his cunning for the portrayal of divinely simple faces; superb limbs, masculine beauty, in the ideal persons of young men. The picture, when we dwell long enough upon its details, emerges into prominence, moreover, as indubitably awe-inspiring, terrifying, dreadful in its poignant expression of wrath, retaliation, thirst for vengeance, cruelty, and hopeless horror. But the supreme point even of Doomsday, of the Dies Iræ, has not been seized. We do not hear the still small voice of pathos and of human hope which thrills through Thomas à Celano's hymn:

> Quærens me sedisti lassus, Redemisti crucem passus; Tantus labor non sit cassus."

II

Michelangelo di Lodovico di Leonardo Buonarroti Simone, for such is the formidable full name of our hero, is great as sculptor, painter, architect, and was a poet in addition. There is no controversy about his greatness as sculptor and painter, but there is question as to his preëminence as architect. Russel Sturgis, himself an authority on architecture, thinks Michelangelo has no high rank as architect: and Charles Garnier, the architect of the Paris Opera-house, thinks tradition errs in making Michelangelo as great in architecture as he was in sculpture and painting. He even says that the famous Florentine did not know the grammar of this art; but Mr. Garnier admits that the intuition of his genius has succeeded in giving some of his buildings a style and large character which few architects really worthy of the name have been able to achieve.

His poetry usually took the form of the sonnet; some of these productions may be mere exercises in the poetic art, as was so common in the later Elizabethan period in England. Many of them are the passionate outpourings of a reserved, stoical soul. Like his sculpture and painting his poems are neither smooth nor picturesque; they are virile and rugged. His themes are the admiration of spiritual beauty, the awe of death, the yearning for the absent dead, the "mingling of awe and love and

pity which dilates the heart of the believer before the image of the Crucified." He is a Puritan of the Puritans before Puritanism had become a cult, but a Puritan whose soul had absorbed the spirit of Plato as well as of Dante, of Petrarch as well as that of Savonarola.

On the 10th day of September, 1554, he writes to Vasari,—"You will probably say that I am old and mad to think of writing sonnets; yet since many persons pretend that I am in my second childhood, I have thought it well to act accordingly." He then sends the following magnificent sonnet which we give in the translation of Symonds:

Now hath my life across a stormy sea,

Like a frail bark, reached that wide port where all
Are bidden, ere the final reckoning fall
Of good and evil for eternity.

Now know I well how that fond phantasy
Which made my soul the worshipper and thrall
Of earthly art is vain; how criminal
Is that which all men seek unwillingly.

Those amorous thoughts that were so lightly dressed,
What are they when the double death is nigh?
The one I know for sure, the other dread.

Painting nor sculpture now can lull to rest
My soul, that turns to His great love on high,
Whose arms to clasp us on the cross were spread.

Ш

Much has been said about the vehement fiery temper of our artist, perhaps too much. We rather like his freedom from the sycophancy of the age in which he lived. Vasari has told us of his quarrel with Pope Julius II, and we like the sculptor all the more for the quarrel, for the sturdy sculptor was greater than Pope or Prince - many of whom are today remembered only because associated with the artist whom they regarded merely as an instrument to make their reign more glorious. While Michelangelo was at work on the monument to the Pope he was subjected to continual interruption from the fiery old Pope, who proved to be meddlesome as well as critical. Perhaps an impatient word escaped from the sculptor who may have forgotten for the moment the reverence due to His Holiness. At any rate when the new shipment of marble came from Carrara it was necessary for the sculptor to get money from the Pope, but His Holiness was busy and could not see Michelangelo. This happened several times until the indignation of the sculptor "You don't know to whom it is was aroused. you are refusing admittance," said a bystander in his hearing to the lackey who shut him out. know him very well, but I am here to obey my orders," was the reply. In hot haste Michelangelo went home, gave orders that his possessions be sold

to the Jews, and then rode all the night till he had left Rome far behind and was on Tuscan soil. Julius sent after him, but the proud sculptor replied briefly that it was impossible for him to go back to Rome.

At the end of three months the Pope himself came after the distinguished sculptor as far as Bologna, where Michelangelo was induced to come also to meet the distinguished patron. Let Vasari tell the rest of the story,—"Having reached the presence. Michelangelo knelt down before His Holiness, who looked askance at him with an angry countenance, and said, 'Instead of coming to us, it appears that thou hast been waiting till we should come to thee,' in allusion to the fact that Bologna is nearer to Florence than is Rome. But with clear voice and hands courteously extended, Michelangelo excused himself, having first entreated pardon, admitting that he had acted in anger, but adding that he could not endure to be thus ordered away; if he had been in error, His Holiness would doubtless be pleased to forgive him.

"Now the Bishop who had presented Michelangelo, thinking to aid his excuses, ventured to remark that such men as he were always ignorant, knowing and being worth nothing whatever, once out of their vocation; but this threw the Pope into such a rage that he fell upon the Bishop with a stick which he had in his hands, exclaiming, "Tis thou

which art the ignoramus, with the impertinences thou art pouring forth, and which are such as we ourselves should not think of uttering; 'he then caused the Bishop to be driven out by the usher in waiting with blows of his fist. This offender having departed, the Pope, his rage thus cooled upon the prelate, bestowed his benediction on Michelangelo."

Symonds in his admirable life of this artist quotes a letter from Michelangelo to his nephew Lionardo. It is a live human document showing the direct and hasty manner of an uncle who has no hesitation in speaking the thought that is in him. News had come down to Rome to the old sculptor that the landed property of a certain Francesco Corboli was to be sold. Lionardo was asked to look into the matter and because he did so with some eagerness the uncle seemed to be offended. Michelangelo writes,—"You have been very hasty in sending me information regarding the estates of the Corboli. I did not think you were yet in Florence. Are you afraid lest I should change my mind, as some one may have put it into your head? I tell you that I want to go slowly in this affair, because the money I must pay has been gained here with toil and trouble unintelligible to one who was born clothed and shod as you were. About your coming post-haste to Rome, I do not know that you came in such a hurry when I was a pauper and lacked bread. Enough for you to throw away the money that you did not

The fear of losing what you might inherit on my death impelled you. You say it was your duty to come, by reason of the love you bear me. The love of a woodworm! If you really loved me, you would have written now: 'Michelangelo, spend those 3000 ducats there upon yourself, for you have given us enough already: your life is dearer to us than your money.' You have all of you lived forty years upon me, and I have never had from you so much as one good word. 'Tis true that last year I scolded and rebuked you so that for very shame you sent me a load of trebbiano. I almost wish you hadn't! I do not write this because I am unwilling to buy. Indeed I have a mind to do so, in order to obtain an income for myself, now that I cannot work more. But I want to buy at leisure, so as not to purchase some annoyance. Therefore do not hurry."

This is the querulousness of an old man who has been irritated by mental and physical suffering. How human it all is! Symonds thinks he had a real affection for Lionardo; he must have had or how would he have felt privileged to write the following letter to this nephew who it seems had been careless about his handwriting? "Do not write to me again. Each time I get one of your letters, a fever takes me with the trouble I have in reading it. I do not know where you learned to write. I think that if you were writing to the greatest donkey in the world

you would do it with more care. Therefore do not add to the annoyances I have, for I have already quite enough of them."

IV

It is pleasant to turn to the other side of the character of this genius, for there was another side. When Urbino, the man who had been both servant and companion for many years, died, Vasari wrote to Michelangelo, who replies in these words,—" My dear Messer Giorgio, - I can but ill write at this time, yet to reply to your letter I will try to say something. You know that Urbino is dead, and herein have I received a great mercy from God, but to my heavy grief and infinite loss. The mercy is this, that whereas in his life he has kept me living, so in his death he has taught me to die, not only without regret, but with the desire to depart. have had him twenty-six years, have ever found him singularly faithful, and now that I had made him rich, and hoped to have in him the staff and support of my old age, he has disappeared from my sight; nor have I now left any other hope than that of rejoining him in Paradise. But of this God has given me a foretaste, in the most blessed death he has died; his own departure did not grieve him, as did the leaving me in this treacherous world, with so many troubles. Truly is the best part of my being gone with him, nor is anything now left me except

an infinite sorrow. And herewith I bid you fare-well."

This is the Urbino to whom Michelangelo gave two thousand crowns as a protection against poverty. "When I die what wilt thou do?" asked the master one day. "Serve some one else," was Urbino's reply. "Thou poor creature!" said Michelangelo, "I must save thee from that." Thereupon he gave his servant the two thousand crowns. "A mode of proceeding," comments Vasari, "befitting the Cæsars and Princes of the world."

Condivi, a long and intimate friend, writes in warm appreciation,-" Oftentimes have I heard Michelangelo discoursing and expounding on the theme of love, and have afterwards gathered from those who were present upon these occasions that he spoke precisely as Plato wrote, and as we may read in Plato's work upon this subject. I, for myself, do not know what Plato says; but I know full well that, having so long and so intimately conversed with Michelangelo, I never once heard issue from that mouth words that were not of the truest honesty, and such as had virtue to extinguish in the heart of youth any disordered and uncurbed desire which might assail it. I am sure, too, that no vile thoughts were born in him, by this token, that he loved not only the beauty of human beings, but in general all fair things."

For eighty-nine years this giant thought and

wrought. It is no light praise to say that whether he wrought on canvas or in marble or in the making of poetry his work is never seductive or enfeebling to the moral sense. In the fine words of Symonds,—"... the genius of the man transports the mind to spiritual altitudes, where the lust of the eye and the longings of the flesh are left behind us in a lower region. Only a soul attuned to the same chord of intellectual rapture can breathe in that fiery atmosphere and feel the vibrations of the electricity."

v

Critics and biographers have always delighted in drawing comparisons between Raphael and Michelangelo. One biographer points out that while Raphael loved women, Michelangelo seemingly was insensible to their charms; that while Raphael was fond of society and the display of magnificence, the austere sculptor preferred solitude and lived almost sordidly; that while Raphael enjoyed and lived through a few short brilliant years of flaming success, Michelangelo worked with strength unabated until almost ninety years old; that the one was sunny, amiable, full of the joy of life, the other melancholy, grim, and gloomy.

More than a quarter of a century ago, William Wetmore Story, the American sculptor who was both an able artist and a delightful writer, published a

magazine article in which he compared the two bril-"The names of Raffaelle and liant Florentines. Michelangelo are so associated, that that of one always rises in the mind when the other is mentioned. Their geniuses are as absolutely opposite as are their characters. Each is the antithesis of the other. In the ancient days we have the same kind of difference between Homer and Vergil, Demosthenes and Cicero, Æschylus and Euripides. In later days, Molière and Racine, Rousseau and Voltaire, Shakespeare and Sir Philip Sidney, Beethoven and Mozart, Dante and Ariosto, Victor Hugo and Lamartine or, to take our own age, Delacroix and Ary Scheffer, Browning and Tennyson. To the one belongs the sphere of power, to the other that of charm. One fights his way to immortality, the other woos it.

"Raffaelle was of the latter class — sweet of nature, gentle of disposition, gifted with a rare sense of grace, a facile talent of design, and a refinement of feeling which, if it sometimes degenerated into weakness, never utterly lost its enchantment. He was exceedingly impressionable, reflected by turns the spirit of his masters,— was first Perugino, and afterwards modified his style to that of Fra Bartolommeo, and again, under the influence of Michelangelo, strove to tread in his footsteps. He was not of a deep nature nor of a powerful character. There was nothing torrential in his genius, bursting its way through obstacles and sweeping all

before it. It was rather that of a calm river, flowing at its own sweet will, and reflecting peacefully the passing figures of life. He painted as the bird sings. He was an artist because nature made him one - not because he had vowed himself to art. and was willing to struggle and fight for its smile. He was gentle and friendly - a pleasant companion — a superficial lover — handsome of person and pleasing of address - who always went surrounded by a corona of followers, who disliked work and left the execution of his designs in great measure to his pupils, while he toyed with the Fornarina. I do not mean to undervalue him in what he did. His works are charming — his invention was lively. He had the happy art of telling his story in outline, better, perhaps, than any one of his age. His highest reach was the 'Madonna di S. Sisto.' and this certainly is full of that large sweetness and spiritual sensibility which entitles him to the common epithet divino. But when he died at the early age of thirtyseven, he had come to his full development, and there is no reason to suppose that he would ever have attained a greater height. Indeed, during his later years he was tired of his art, neglected his work, became more and more academic, and preferred to bask in the sunshine of his fame on its broad levels, to girding up his loins to struggle up precipitous ascents to loftier peaks. The world already began to blame him for this neglect, and to

say that he had forgotten how to paint himself, and gave his designs only to his students to execute. Moved by these rumors, he determined alone to execute a work in fresco, and this work was the famous 'Galatea' of the Palazzo Farnese. far advanced in it, when, during his absence one morning, a dark, short, stern-looking man called to In the absence of Raffaelle, this man see him. gazed attentively at the 'Galatea' for a long time, and then, taking a piece of charcoal, he ascended a ladder which stood in the corner of the vast room, and drew off-hand on the wall a colossal male head. Then he came down and went away, saying to the attendant, 'If Signore Raffaelle wishes to know who came to see him, show him my card there on the wall.' When Raffaelle returned, the assistant told him of his visitor, and showed him the head. is Michelangelo,' he said, 'or the devil.'

"And Michelangelo it was. Raffaelle well knew what that powerful and colossal head meant, and he felt the terrible truth of its silent criticism on his own work. It meant, Your fresco is too small for the room — your style is too pleasing and trivial. Make something grand and colossal. Brace your mind to higher purpose, train your hand to nobler design. . . . Raffaelle's disposition was sweet and attractive, and he was beloved by all his friends. . . . All this one sees in his face, which, turning, gazes dreamily at us over his shoulder, with dark soft eyes,

long hair, and smooth, unsuffering cheeks where time has ploughed no furrows—easy, charming, graceful, refined, and somewhat feminine of character.

"Michelangelo was made of sterner stuff than His temper was violent, his bearing haughty, his character impetuous. He had none of the personal graces of his great rival. . . . His face was, as it were, hammered sternly out by fate; his brow corrugated by care, his cheeks worn by thought, his hair and beard stiffly curled and bull like; his expression sad and intense, with a weary longing in his deep-set eyes. Doubtless, at times, they flamed with indignation and passion — for he was very irascible, and suffered no liberties to be taken with him. could not 'sport with Amaryllis in the shade, or with the tangles of Neæra's hair.' Art was his mistress, and a stern mistress she was, urging him ever onward to greater and greater heights. He loved her with a passion of the intellect; there was nothing he would not sacrifice for her. He was willing to be poor, almost to starve, to labor with incessant zeal, grudging even the time that sleep demanded, only to win her He could not have been a pleasant companion, and he was never a lover of woman. . . . Yet with all this ruggedness and imperiousness of character, he had a deep tenderness of nature, and was ready to meet any sacrifice for those whom he loved. Personal privations he cared little for, and sent to his family all his earnings, save what was absolutely

necessary to support life. He had no greed for wealth, no love of display, no desire for luxuries; a better son never lived, and his unworthy brother he forgave over and over again, never wearying of endeavoring to set him on his right path.

"The frescoes in the Sistine Chapel at Rome, and the statues in the Medicean Chapel at Florence, are the greatest monuments of Michelangelo's power as an artist. Whatever may be the defects of these great works, they are of a Titanic brood, they have left no successors, as they had no progenitors. They defy criticism, however just, and stand by themselves outside the beaten track of art, to challenge our ad-So also, despite of all the faults and demiration. fects, how grand a figure Michelangelo himself is in history, how high a place he holds! His name itself is a power. He is one of the mighty masters that the world cannot forget. Kings and emperors die and are forgotten - dynasties change and governments fall — but he, the silent, stern worker, reigns unmoved in the great realm of art."

REYNOLDS

He was the first English painter who ventured to give light gay landscape backgrounds to his portraits; and the first who enlivened them by momentary action or expression. . . .

As yet, of the English school of art, Reynolds remains unequalled, in the union of felicitous inventions and variety in the treatment of his subject with fidelity to general nature; and in a certain characteristic grace and simplicity, more allied to mental and moral refinement than to mere conventional elegance.

ANNA B. JAMESON.



THE DUCHESS OF DEVONSHIRE WITH HER BABE Reynolds



REYNOLDS

1

The story of many an artist is the record of long and patient toiling in poverty and obscurity, of recognition only after death, and of a genius that develops a taste for its product after the endurance of scorn and ridicule. But such is not the story of Sir Joshua Reynolds, one of fortune's favorites. "The great secret of being One of his rules was: happy in this world is, not to mind or be affected by small things." This is a fine rule and one that can be followed most successfully when one has an income of \$30,000 a year from the pursuit of an art in which one delights. Why worry about the house rent, or such a small matter as the gas bill, when in three or four hours one can paint a portrait which will extract from the pocket of the noble sitter one hundred and fifty guineas?

The strange part in Reynolds's prosperity is that few envied the happy and fortunate painter. He himself was of so kindly and generous a nature that envy and jealousy were silenced. Dr. Johnson, the Ursa Major of that celebrated coterie of the eighteenth century, said that if he and Reynolds were to

quarrel, he (Johnson) would be at a great disadvantage because there was nothing detrimental to be said against Reynolds. The merry Goldsmith composed a mock epitaph, before the death of Reynolds, in which he said,—

Here Reynolds is laid, and to tell you my mind,
He has not left a wiser or better behind,
His pencil was striking, resistless and grand;
His manners were gentle, complying, and bland;
Still born to improve us in every part;
His pencil our faces, his manners our heart:
To coxcombs averse, yet most civilly steering.
When they judged without skill, he was still hard of hearing,
When they talked of their Raphaels, Correggios and stuff,
He shifted his trumpet, and only took snuff.

What an interesting group that was! — The coterie including Sir Joshua, the founder of the English school of portrait-painting; Gibbon, the historian whose Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire is a monumental masterpiece; Garrick, the greatest actor of his age; Goldsmith, the butt of the company but now, perhaps, "the brightest star of that brilliant constellation;" Johnson, the literary dictator immortalized by Boswell; Fox, the brilliant but dissolute statesman; Burke, the greatest philosophic orator in the English tongue; and Sheridan, the witty dramatist. In this group none was better loved than the refined, appreciative, and gifted Reynolds.

Ħ

Joshua Reynolds, the son of a clergyman whose family numbered eleven children, was born in the little town of Plymton, Devonshire, July 23, 1723. Ioshua was the seventh child. His father conducted the Grammar school of the village, where he had fine opportunity to estimate the ability of his Joshua. It is possible that the boy, while cultivating a budding interest in drawing, neglected the formal studies, such as Latin and Greek, for on one of those early drawings the father wrote,—"Done by Joshua out of pure idleness." This is the verdict of the father in his rôle of schoolmaster; the schoolmaster in his capacity as father later had the intelligence to abandon his original intention of making a physician out of his son and sympathetically entered into the boy's project of becoming a painter.

Jonathan Richardson had written a book on art which somehow fell into the hands of young Reynolds. In after years Joshua declared that it was the reading of this book that "made him a painter." At the age of seventeen Reynolds entered the studio of Hudson, the pupil and son-in-law of Richardson. To enter as an apprentice he had to pay £120, half of which was borrowed from his sister, Mrs. Palmer. Hudson was the fashionable portrait-painter of London, but he was more skilled in painting fashions than in producing faces that one

remembered. To paint a portrait, of course, one had to paint a face, but to Hudson and his school, waistcoats, wigs, and laces were equally important.

After two years in the studio of Hudson, Joshua suddenly left. There is a rumor that Hudson became jealous of the growing fame of his most gifted pupil and dismissed him in a "tiff." It is possible, but equally possible that Reynolds felt that he had learned all he could learn from Hudson and that he might now shift for himself. Incidentally, it would be pleasant to have an income by the painting of the portraits of country gentlemen.

When he was twenty-six years old he met Commodore Keppel at the home of Lord Edgecumbe. Keppel was two years younger than Reynolds and wanted companionship during his voyage to the coast of Africa, so he invited the young painter to accompany him. With the Commodore, a brave and friendly spirit, he visited Lisbon, Cadiz, Gibraltar, and Algiers. At Minorca he painted the portraits of the officers of the garrison, painting with rapidity and receiving three guineas for each portrait.

When he reached Italy he returned no more to the British war-ship. He now reached the Mecca of English artists, the land of the painter's dreams. From Leghorn he hastened to Rome. After Rome came Florence, Bologna, and Venice; especially enjoying at Venice the works of Titian, Veronese, and Tintoretto.

Writing of his impressions when he first found himself in Rome, he says, "I found myself in the midst of works executed upon principles with which I was unacquainted. I felt my ignorance and stood abashed. All the undigested notions of painting which I had brought with me from England, where the art was at its lowest ebb — it could never indeed be lower — were to be totally done away with and eradicated from my mind. It was necessary, as it was expressed on a very solemn occasion, that I should become as a little child. Notwithstanding my disappointment, I proceeded to copy some of those excellent works. I viewed them again and again; I never affected to feel their merits, and to admire them more than I really did. In a short time a new taste and new preceptions began to dawn upon me, and I was convinced that I had originally formed a false opinion of the perfection of art, and that this great painter (Raphael) was well entitled to the high rank which he holds in the estimation of the world."

III

In 1752 Reynolds is again in London. His apprenticeship is ended; he is ready to play the game of winning fame and wealth by the pursuit of his beloved art. With vigorous health, ambition, training at home and abroad, the impressions of a youthful traveler, the mind of a philosopher, and the con-

viction that genius in but another name for hard work, what could he not do?

It is interesting to note that the first picture that attracted wide-spread attention was a full-length portrait of Commodore Keppel, who is represented as standing on a stormy sea shore, giving animated directions to unseen figures in the distance. There was a freshness and liveliness to this picture that was something new in the conventional portraiture of that day. London talked about the artist who painted men rather than drapery. And having talked until the topic was threadbare, it next flocked to the studio of the artist, determined to give the painter the opportunity to produce a portrait that should out-Keppel Keppel. The painter prospered even though at first his prices were very moderate, charging but five guineas a portrait. He considered one hundred and fifty portraits a fair year's work. When he had attained fame, his prices ranged from a hundred to a hundred and fifty guineas.

In recording that Reynolds painted one hundred and fifty portraits a year, one must not forget Giuseppe Marchi, the "drapery man." Marchi had attached himself to Reynolds, when the latter was in Italy. He became his devoted follower and helper. He learned to paint almost as well as Reynolds himself, at least as far as the superficial part of the work was concerned. At the same time we must remember that Reynolds was extremely

facile as well as skilful in his workmanship. He was also a prodigious worker. He made it a rule to work whether or not he felt any inspiration. was fond of society, and he lived in an age when clubs flourished; but he made it a rule never to be seen out of his studio in the day-time, though one writer has wittily observed that he seems to have had equal objection, except when he received company, to be found at home after dark. But when he was enjoying the life of the clubs, he associated with those who could amuse or instruct him. He was a keen observer of outward things, and had that rare quality, — the ability to listen to others. "In his power of listening with intelligence," says a writer in the Quarterly Review, "lies one of the great secrets of his power of making and keeping such dissimilar friends as Johnson, Burke, Goldsmith, Gibbon, Wilkes, and a host of others, who, at constant feud with each other, were all agreed in their warm attachment to Reynolds."

In 1768, when Reynolds was at the summit of his fame and influence, the Royal Academy of Arts was founded, with Reynolds as its first president. In that same year he was knighted by the king, an act that filled burly Dr. Johnson with so much joy that he broke his rule in regard to the use of wine. Reynolds took great interest in advancing the influence and standards of the Royal Academy. He inaugurated the annual Academy dinner, a function

which has become one of the social events of London, being attended by the Prince of Wales and other personages of distinction. From time to time he delivered discourses on the subject of art to the students of the Academy. These discourses had wide publicity and were translated into various continental languages. Empress Catherine the Great, of Russia, sent diamonds, her portrait, and an autograph letter, thanking Reynolds for the profit and pleasure which his discourses had given her. The world refuses to believe that a man can be great in two lines of endeavor, and so those who had to acknowledge that Reynolds was the greatest English painter of his time refused to believe that he had any literary merit. They said Burke or Johnson wrote Reynolds's public addresses. Burke contented himself with a simple denial, but Johnson, who really had no appreciation of art, said he would as little presume to write for Revnolds as he would to paint for him.

IV

Sir Joshua Reynolds died on the 23d of February, 1792. The last few years of his life were depressing: he was almost deaf, an affliction that had come upon him in his youth from a sickness while on his visit to Italy; he was losing his sight, and lived in fear of blindness which never came; and he suffered from a disease that induced melancholy. Boswell

writes to a friend, Temple, "My spirits have been still more sunk by seeing Sir Joshua Reynolds almost as low as myself. He has for more than two months past had a pain in his blind eye, the effect of which has been to occasion a weakness in the other, and he broods over the dismal apprehension of becoming quite blind. He has been kept so low as to diet, that he is quite relaxed and desponding. He who used to be looked upon as perhaps the most happy man in the world, is now as I tell you."

Upon his death Burke wrote a beautiful obituary. saying, among other words of appreciation,—"Sir Joshua Reynolds was, on very many accounts, one of the most memorable men of his time. He was the first Englishman who added the praise of the elegant arts to the other glories of his country. taste, in grace, in facility, in happy invention, and in the richness and harmony of coloring, he was equal to the great masters of the renowned ages. . . . His talents of every kind . . . rendered him the center of a very great an unparalleled variety of agreeable societies, which will be dissipated by his death. He had too much merit not to excite jealousy; too much innocence to provoke enmity. The loss of no man of his time can be felt with more sincere, general and unmixed sorrow."

V

Reynolds will always be judged as a portrait-He painted ideal pictures and some landscapes, but he had neither the requisite imagination for the one, nor the sympathy with nature for the He did have keenness of perception, facility, other. refinement, and the power to seize the fleeting expression that revealed the best in his subject. there was anything manly about a man," writes J. C. Van Dyke, "feminine about a woman, or childlike about a child, he noticed it at once. And these were the qualities upon which he concentrated his strength. He appealed frankly and boldly to the taste for dignity, charm, winsomeness, loveliness, in the personal presence, and the appeal was not in vain — is not in vain to-day. The eternal womanly he saw in every woman. . . . Besides this, he saw in some haughtiness, loftiness, distinction: in others mildness, maternal feeling, sadness; in others again, gaiety, coquetry, gracefulness. How shrewd he was in his observation of the look, the pose, the smile that make women captivating! How sensitive he was to the young girl's modest glance, the coquette's sly roguery, the lady's frank demeanor! The witchery women, the fascination of the sex, the nameless something that leads on to love, he knew by heart, though no wife taught him. . . . Taking him for all in all. Reynolds must be ranked at the head of the English school. He had not Hogarth's originality, nor Gainsborough's delicacy, nor Romney's spirit, nor Lawrence's skill; but in point of view, taste, intelligence, and breadth of accomplishment, he excelled any one of them."



MURILLO

Murillo was the spoiled child of his own time, and he has continued to be the spoiled child of subsequent generations up to the present; but it is already foreshadowed that the generations to come will judge him less blindly. . . . On the other hand, it is true that Murillo's work has in it a true fundamental value, for wide-spread popular admiration, no matter how superficial, has always some just basis. The power of Murillo is due to the fact that he was one of the most fertile artists of his time, and that he had an engaging personality which he was able to put into his work.

LUCIEN SOLVAY.



THE HOLY FAMILY Murillo

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MURILLO

I

"Go to Italy to study the work of the great Italians," said Velasquez to the young Murillo, the painter from Seville in whom the great court painter had taken an interest because he had discerned great possibilities in the aspiring youth. The young Murillo, however, did not take this excellent advice, but returned to Seville, his native town, where he spent the rest of his years in diligently following the bent of his genius. Interesting might it be to speculate what effect a visit to Italy would have had upon the art of Murillo. The art of Velasquez had not been swerved from its originality by the study of the great Italian masters; it had been broadened and purified by a patient study of those who had preceded Had Murillo gone to Italy, it is possible that his popularity in his own time would not have been so great as it was, but it is also possible that a visit to Italy would have impressed him so strongly with the importance of mastering the technique of painting, and would have kindled his imagination so effectively, that today his fame would equal that of Velasquez; for it is significant that while the fame of

Velasquez has been steadily growing, until now he is at the very pinnacle of renown, that of Murillo has been steadily diminishing.

II

Bartolome Esteban Murillo was born at Seville in the last week of 1617, the year after the death of Shakspere. His parents were poor people who worked hard to make a living. At the age of nine, the boy was an orphan in the care of his mother's only brother. Noticing that his young nephew amused himself by making sketches on the walls and stones of the city, the uncle apprenticed the young boy to Juan del Castillo, a clever but mediocre artist. Among Castillo's pupils was Pedro de Moya, Murillo's senior by seven years. De Moya, quitting the studio of the commonplace Castillo, wandered away to Flanders and England, at one time studying under Van Dyck. When he returned after a year's absence, his tales of the world beyond Seville must have inflamed the young Murillo with the desire to seek new experiences also. He left Seville, but with his limited means could go no farther than Madrid.

But why need he go farther than Madrid? There lived Velasquez, the greatest painter of his time, perhaps of all time. Murillo must have had a very attractive personality, or have manifested signs of genius at that early stage of his career, for we find that Velasquez soon took a deep personal interest

in the welfare of the youthful painter from Seville. He admitted Murillo to his own studio, introduced him to the famous Count Duke Olivarez, the most influential statesman at the court of Philip, and gave him both money and helpful criticism.

After three fruitful years in Madrid, years of association with Velasquez, Murillo returned to his native city, Seville, the city forever to be associated with the name of Murillo, for there he painted sacred pictures for cloister and cathedral, there he painted his fruit sellers and beggars whom he immortalized on his canvases, and there he finally died.

Ш

Seville was no mean city. Before the time of Philip II it had been the flourishing and beautiful capital of Spain. In admiration of its climate, its surrounding country, its cathedral, its ancient palaces and coteries of artists, scholars, and nobility, the Spaniards had called it "the pearl of cities."

Murillo's return to his native city was not accompanied by the blare of trumpets. Quietly he had stolen away, quietly he returned. In fact, so modest or obscure had he been that his absence had been unnoticed except by a few of his most intimate friends. The public imagined, said one of his contemporaries, "that he had shut himself up for two long years, studying from the life, and thus had acquired his skill." For the public did soon notice that a new

Murillo was in their midst. He was soon commissioned to paint eleven pictures for the cloister of the Franciscans, illustrating the lives of their saints. Following the advice of Velasquez, Murillo "had gone direct to nature for his inspiration, and had translated the stories of the saints and the narratives of the Bible into popular dialect."

"For the first time," writes Mr. Williamson, "Spain saw depicted the beauty of her everyday life, the charm of the occurrences which went on in her own streets; and it was a revelation which took her by surprise, and aroused mingled feelings of astonishment, of resentment, and almost of horror, in the minds of those who gazed at the early works of the artist.

"From the very first this was the line taken by Murillo. He loved his country passionately; he realized its charm; he revelled in its glorious color, in its brilliant light, and in the soft rich depth of its shadows. The stories connected with the faith, of which he was so devoted a man, were in his mind connected with the events of the life about him. He knew nothing of Palestine, but he did know Spain, and for the Spaniard he resolved that they should be set in Spanish surroundings. He therefore went frankly to nature for all he wanted, and when he had to paint Scriptural scenes or the events in hagiological literature, they were painted from the people about him, in the landscapes which he knew and

loved, and with models in the costume of the countryside, such as were familiar to every Andalusian of his day."

After a prosperous career, Murillo died in his sixty-fifth year. He had been asked to paint five pictures for the Capuchin Church of Cadiz. While painting one of the pictures, "The Marriage of St. Catharine," he fell from the scaffolding, and was seriously injured. He was carried back to Seville, where he died several months after the accident.

ΙV

From all accounts we infer that Murillo was a man of gentle disposition, generous impulses, simple habits, and of strong religious feeling. No painter of religious subjects was ever more sincerely loved by the Spaniards. His religious paintings were the artist's expression of a fervent religious nature. There is no evidence he was ever eccentric, or that he indulged in those vagaries of conduct frequently associated with what is called the artistic temperament. Although not associating with princes and courtiers as did Velasquez, he was as far removed from the Bohemian type of artist as was the haughty Velasquez. In his academy of art at Seville he never permitted profanity or vulgarity; and only persons of upright life and of belief in the sacred dogmas of the Holy Catholic Church were admitted as students. He believed that art is serious, that the

artist who would depict the life of the Christ or the sacrifices and sufferings of the saints must be in sympathy with his subject.

Although Murillo's paintings are now to be found in all the great galleries of Europe, it is in the Prado that he can be most fully studied, for there are now in that famous gallery forty-five specimens of his work. One of the best of his religious subjects, many think it the best, is his "Conception." In this picture we have the Virgin floating in space with her feet upon a crescent moon. Surrounding the moon at her feet are Cherubs and Seraphs, the one representing wisdom and contemplation, the other love and adoration. The Virgin's sweet face is glorified with a rapt expression of purity and innocence. "The background," writes Mr. Timothy Cole, "is a mellow radiance of warmth and light, softening into the cooler tints of the clouds in which the angels sport, holding various attributes of the Virgin. . . . Her robe is white, for virgin innocence and purity; and her mantle blue, for truth and sorrow; she is the 'mother of sorrows and consolations.' The picture is a splendid piece of decoration; the golden background and silver clouds, the rich dark blue of the Virgin's mantle and her whole robe forming a telling combination of simple and powerful values."

The "Holy Family," now in the National Gallery, the "St. Antony," in the Berlin Gallery, and the "Immaculate Conception," one of the treasures of the Louvre, are among the best known sacred paintings by Murillo. In the past these paintings have been most highly praised by the connoisseurs; they have always been greatly admired by the populace. In 1852, at the sale of Marshal Soult's collection, the French government paid \$123,060 for the "Immaculate Conception." But today Murillo is admired by the specialist for his ability as a genrepainter, rather than for his skill as a painter of madonnas and virgins and saints. His pictures of the common people, beggars, fruit venders, meloneaters, and flower-girls are called "the frankest and most truthful expressions of the life of the people ever painted. They reveal Spain in its most fascinating aspect; they speak of the color, of the heat, of the light, of that land of perpetual sun; they are of the very atmosphere of Andalusia, and what is so remarkable about them is the absolutely novel unreserve with which they are painted, and that in a country where art was bound down by hard and fast regulations, and where up to the time of Murillo the rejection of conventionalism had never been thought of for a single moment."

The "Spanish Flower Girl," now in Dulwich, England, is a fine example of Murillo's ability to take an ordinary subject from the common life of his day and glorify it with beauty. The picture, about four feet by three, represents a maid offering roses for sale to the passers-by. "She is clad in a yellowish bodice

and dress, while her undersleeves and chemise, with the turban about the head, are white. Her petticoat is a yellow-brown; over her shoulder is a brown embroidered scarf, in the end of which are four roses — white and pink. To the left lies a landscape with bushes and cloudy sky. It is a masterpiece of invention and in characteristic harmony of rich colors."

As I said in the beginning of this sketch, the fame of Murillo has been diminishing. This is due to varying standards of taste. It is felt that Murillo is not an idealist with great imaginative power and fertility of invention, and that he falls short of being a realist unafraid to picture the stern truth of life. Adverse critics have compared his paintings to some of the defective architecture of the Renascence, to those Italian churches whose interior is decorated with paper flowers, wax dolls dressed in satin and decked with sham jewels. His paintings are said to be popular because they are commonplace. facility in painting produced work without individuality and distinction. "His qualities," writes Mr. C. S. Ricketts, "were in their essence realistic and trivial; it is his triviality and sentimentality which have shipwrecked his natural tendency." There may be elements of justice in such criticism, but it must not be forgotten that a painter who has withstood the changes of taste during three centuries must have some enduring qualities of excellence. He may lack imaginative reach and be deficient as a draughtsman, but dare we forget his mastery of "vaporous color, sometimes silvery, sometimes golden, always suave and caressing"? Or that he was "the most eloquent interpreter of that tender and sensuous piety which, in his country of strange contrasts, flourishes together with a taste for bloody spectacles and the disdainful indifference of the hidalgo?"

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VELASQUEZ

Velasquez is a true master. If he has rivals, none is his superior. Not one among his contemporaries overshadows his glory. Compare him with the most illustrious, with Rembrandt for example — Rembrandt the mighty magician, who makes his people live in an atmosphere of his own invention, who creates an entire world in his powerful imagination, moulds it, gives it light and color, as he feels it to be. . . . There is nothing of this kind with Velasquez. What the Spanish master seeks above all is character and truth. He is a realist in the broadest and best acceptation of the word. He paints nature as he sees her and as she is. that he breathes is our own, his sky is that under which we live. His portraits impress us with the same feeling that we have when in the presence of living beings.

LEON BONNAT.

VELASQUEZ

T

For three centuries the fame of Velasquez has been growing until modern critics and artists have come to consider him, at least as regards technique, the greatest of all painters. Whistler said of him that Art "had dipped the Spaniard's brush in light and air." And Henri Regnault wrote, "Before a work of Velasquez, I feel as if I were looking at reality through an open window." It is this sense of reality that impresses one in seeing a Velasquez. There have been painters with greater power to move the feelings, with a keener insight into the mystery of nature, with a magic quicker to kindle the imagination, with a brush dipped into tenderer, more somber, or more gorgeous colors,—but none whose hand has held the mirror up to life more accurately. artists in Rome thought that Velasquez alone painted reality, the others painted mere decorative convention.

He left no school of imitators, for who can imitate perfection? Yet his influence upon modern art is second to that of none. Regnault, Manet, Carolus-Duran, Monet, Whistler, Degas, and Sargent have

been his devoted admirers. "Corot and Millet," writes F. A. M. Stevenson, "took his principles into the open air; the first painting landscapes with figures, the second figures with landscapes."

Ħ

Diego Rodriguez Velasquez de Silva was born in Seville, 1599. He belongs to that era so productive of genius, the era of Shakspere, Cervantes, Montaigne, Kepler, Galileo, Tasso, Guido Reni, Rembrandt, Van Dyck, and Rubens. At thirteen we find him studying painting under Herrera; then for five years he studied under Pacheco, a man of learning but not a great master in art. He had a charming daughter, charming at least to the young Velasquez, for he married her. From teachers such as these Velasquez absorbed all they had to give. In the house of Pacheco he met the artists, poets, scholars, and gentlemen of the city, and became conversant with the best in manners and culture.

In 1623 there came a summons from Olivárez, the all-powerful minister of Philip IV, requesting the young artist to come to Madrid. Attended by his mulatto slave, the Jean Parejo who himself became so expert a painter that some of his work has been attributed to his master, Velasquez journeyed to Madrid. In a friend's house he lodged and there painted a portrait which was soon carried to the palace by the son of a chamberlain of one of the

princes. An hour later the prince, the king, and the king's brother had gathered about the portrait in admiration, and the future of Velasquez was assured.

Philip IV became the patron of the artist, and in return Velasquez immortalized the king. John La Farge writes: "For thirty-seven years Velasquez painted the king in such a way that the two names are inseparable, and in the history made by art, the king still holds his place through the brush work of his servant, the painter. The heavy but gentle face we follow from boyhood to age. We all know the erect and stately form, naturally delicate, kept healthy through exercise, the beautiful seat in the saddle, the hands equally elegant, whether holding a petition or the bridle of a curveting horse, and beneath the externals shown by the artist, who wished to see no further than the eye, a something that we know to be the mark of fate, the closing of a long descent." But we can imagine that the obligation was not all on the side of the monarch, for in return for this long and faithful service from the devoted and brilliant artist, the king made it possible for Velasquez to live a serene and prosperous life.

And Velasquez painted more than an individual; he painted the varied life of the court, and has given us a picture of the Spanish aristocracy with its grandiose manners and rigid pride. He also loved to turn away from the court with its melancholy and physical degeneracy to the robust life of the com-

mon people, "where he found not only physical health, but a joy of life which echoed his own." How he must have enjoyed turning from the anæmic princes and deformed dwarfs of the court to a scene such as he has immortalized in "The Spinners," where work-girls pose in the robust vigor of Greek statues!

When Rubens, already famous, came to Madrid, he met the young painter of royalty and was pleased with his work and his modesty. It must have been stimulating to the Spaniard to see the accomplished artist at work, but Velasquez was too distinctive and individual a genius to be swerved from his own path. Possibly the trip to Italy, which soon followed, was one result of the visit of Rubens. Philip IV gave Velasquez four hundred ducats for traveling expenses; and Olivárez generously added to this insufficient sum. In Naples Velasquez met the Spanish artist Ribera, whose "Adoration of the Shepherds" was for a long time attributed to Velasquez.

In 1621 he returned to the royal court, again taking his place in the royal court and residing there without interruption for the next eighteen years. This period is called the middle period of his life and art. It was during this time that he painted portraits of the king, of the Infant Balthazar Carlos, of buffoons and dwarfs, and a series of religious paintings. "Perhaps of all the portraits of the little prince," writes La Farge, "the one on horseback,

when he gallops on his pony, full tilt, in a shimmering of daylight, is the most astonishing, as suggesting the noise of motion in the silence of nature." To this period also belongs the "Christ on the Cross," a crucifix wonderful in its terrible pathos, . . . the Savior, beautiful, but not too beautiful, perhaps only just dead, with no expression of agony, and yet by the sudden droop of the head, half-covered by its long hair, giving the strange feeling of sadness, of injustice, and final repose."

TIT

When fifty years old, after these eighteen years of continuous residence in Madrid, he journeyed the second time to Italy. He had been appointed to direct the rebuilding of a portion of the Madrid Alcazar. To secure decorations and decorative artists he went to Italy. From Genoa he went to Milan where he saw the work of the renowned Leonardo; at Venice he secured paintings by the great Tintoretto, that painter whose work several centuries later kindled the enthusiasm of Ruskin; at Parma he saw Correggio's best work before time had dulled its pristine coloring; at Rome he painted the "terrible portrait" of Pope Innocent Tenth.

King Philip had grown so fond of his distinguished painter that he grew impatient at the prolonged stay in Italy. He wrote to his ambassador in Rome, urging an early return by Velasquez,—" If he has not

done it, which I doubt much, it would be well that you should press him so that he should not delay his departure a single minute." Upon his return in June, 1651, he was appointed quartermaster-general of the royal household. In this capacity he had charge of pageants and public festivals; when the king traveled it was Velasquez's duty to provide for the lodging of the king and his retinue; at ceremonial dinners he placed the chair of the king at table, and at state ceremonies he seated the cardinals and viceroys. The salary was three thousand ducats. was during this, the third and last, period of his career that he painted "The Maids of Honor," that picture which today is exhibited in a chamber by itself in the Madrid gallery as the "supreme glory of the court, the last triumph of human vision and delicate design." It was during this same period also that he painted "The Spinners."

So highly esteemed Philip this court painter of his that he elevated him to knighthood in the great order of Santiago, but this was accomplished only through persistence on the king's part. There were objectors who thought that the family of Velasquez had not sufficient rank and long descent of nobility to entitle Velasquez to the emblem of the red cross. But friends testified that "they had never heard that Velasquez had exercised the trade of painting or that he had sold any paintings; that he had only practised his art for his own pleasure and that he might obey

the king." Yet despite the influence of the Spanish monarch exerted in Velasquez's behalf, it was only after a special order had been granted by the Pope that Velasquez was received into the exclusive order of Santiago.

ΙV

He died, August 6, 1660. This was but a month or two after he had been busily engaged in superintending the great ceremonies attending the handing over of Maria Teresa, the king's daughter, to the ambassadors and king of France. The interested parties met at the Isle of Pheasants, a small piece of neutral ground on the frontier. Here on the fourth of June, the two kings met, attended by all their princely splendor, exchanged compliments and gifts, as the young princess was transferred from the royal house of Spain to that of France. It is likely that his duties as quartermaster-general hastened the death of Velasquez, for he had much responsibility both during the conference and while making preparations for it. "From Madrid to the frontier the quartermaster had to procure lodgings for the king and all his court. . . . The cavalcade stretched over a space of eighteen miles, and the king's necessities obliged the use of 3,500 mules, 82 horses, 70 carriages, and 70 wagons."

Upon the margin of a business statement sent by the king to the Junta are these words,—" Estoy

abatido," "I am cast down." He is referring to the death of Velasquez. How expressive and eloquent the tribute! This king, who masked his feelings when provinces slipped from his grasp, could not keep silent when his artist friend passed away. The details concerning the life of the great Spanish painter are few, and the records give us but slight information concerning the nature and character of this man, but the simple tribute of his sovereign is more eloquent than a score of insignificant details.

v

It is generally conceded that "Las Meniñas," or the "Maids of Honor," or the "Ladies in Waiting," is Velasquez's masterpiece. It is now one of the most precious treasures in the Prado, Madrid. was at one time known as "The Family," for it is a picture in which the artist wished us to see a domestic scene as it appeared to the royal parents. While Velasquez is engaged in painting the royal couple, whose figures are reflected in the mirror in the distance, the little Princess Margarita, attended by her dog and two maids of honor, enters the studio of the artist. Velasquez himself is to the left, with a brush in his right hand and a palette in his left. are also two dwarfs and three other persons, one of whom, Tosé Nieto, stands on a flight of steps in the far distance. Altogether, exclusive of the reflected figures in the mirror, there are nine figures, less than



THE MAIDS OF HONOR (LAS MENIÑAS) Velasquez



life-size, in this famous painting. In the center is the young princess.

The praise accorded to this picture in modern works of art criticism is almost fulsome. MacFall in the third volume of his sumptuous History of Painting writes,—" Mark with what genius the very black and white of the design is painted, so that the eye takes in as at a stroke the whole desired impression! And as one gazes upon it, there comes into the sense the realization of the wondrous employment of the color-harmonies whereby the wizard hand has wrought this conquest over us. It all seems so simple. How skilled the massing to create the wondrous deeps of it all; how skilled the lighting to set the imperious child, little Margarita, into the front of the theater of our vision! How the line and mass give lift to the whole impression and create the sense of dignity by that uplifting! Sullied as is the atmosphere of the thing by the compulsion into it of the loathsome stunted abortion of the dwarf, whom the vile taste of the king made the companion and plaything of his little child, how craftily Velasquez, even whilst this half-woman takes the foreground, sets the abortion aside by his skill of arrangement! Here we have art evolved to a realm of utterance of which the Renaissance knew nothing — as wide and as high and as deep beyond the Italians as the Italians were beyond the Byzantines. The imperious child, trussed and stiff in her fantastic

hoops, being won to sit to the painter by the cajoling of the maids of honor, shows in an atmosphere of the stilted gravity and solemn etiquette of the Court as truly and eloquently as any phrasing in any art could utter it, all bathed in the mysterious light and held in the haunting shadows that give forth the sensation desired, like fullest orchestration of great music. I have seen it objected that all that is lacking is the 'rhythmic swirl of Raphael's drawing!' The man that could compare Raphael's drawing, or painting, with that of Velasquez, does not know what drawing is. What resonance is in the deeps of that high room possessed with half-revealing shadows!"

In one respect, so at least it seems to me, "Las Meniñas" lacks one of the two essentials of any masterpiece meriting the highest distinction. expression of the noblest art there must be more than perfection of form. There must be a noble subject. The most perfect reproduction of a dog gnawing a bone falls short of the perfect reproduction of the figure of a battle-scarred veteran in whose countenance one sees the pathos and vigor of a life of con-Burns's poem To a Mouse has exquisite perfection of form, but his Cotter's Saturday Night makes a wider appeal with its excellence of form and its dignity and beauty of subject. Hamlet and Faust and the Book of Job have greatness of theme as well as excellence of form. Keats, in the stanza beginning

"And still she slept an azure-lidded sleep,"

gives us a perfect description of delicious viands, but edibles, however well prepared and daintily arranged, do not constitute material for the highest type of poetry. So too in a picture. The subject matter in "Las Meniñas" is inferior to the technique. yet it is a masterpiece, justifying even the encomium of Raphael Mengs who on seeing it exclaimed, "Velasquez seems not to paint, but to will his figures on the canvas." But it lacks the loftiness and dignity of Raphael's "Sistine Madonna," the grandeur and horror of Michelangelo's "Last Judgment," the terrible pathos of Rubens's "Descent from the Cross," the impressive character portrayal of Leonardo's "Last Supper." These are greater pictures because the subject matter is greater. course, subject matter is not everything, neither is technical skill, but, when subject matter is of the highest type and technique has reached approximate perfection, we have a greater product than when perfect technique is expended upon an inferior subject.

In the London National Gallery there is a wonderful Venus, usually known as the "Rokeby Venus," because for a long time it was in the possession of the owner of Rokeby House, Yorkshire. It is one of the very few nude figures painted by Velasquez, for there was a rule of the Inquisition forbidding the painting of the undraped female form. But as the

King felt himself above the power of the Inquisition, he commanded Velasquez to paint this picture. At least that is the tradition, but it is only just to add that there are critics who think this painting is not a Velasquez. They argue that it is not in his manner and that it was likely painted by del Mazo, the pupil and son-in-law of the great Velasquez. However, the following passage occurs in two inventories of a Spanish grandee, the one drawn up in 1682 and the other in 1688,—"There deserves mention a Venus of life-size reclining nude, with a child who holds up for her a mirror into which she gazes. This picture is an original work by Don Diego Velasquez."

It was bought for Rokeby House for £500 on the recommendation of Sir Thomas Lawrence. In 1906 it was purchased for £45,000 by the National Art Collection Fund, presented to the nation and placed in the National Gallery. In March, 1914, the attention of the world was called to it by the vandalism of an English suffragette who inflicted five slashes upon the picture in an unsuccessful attempt to destroy the picture beyond hope of restoration.

The picture is admired for its exquisite coloring; some think that it was painted in emulation of that great colorist, Titian. A ruby-colored curtain forms the background, the pale blue scarf of the dovewinged Cupid contrasts with the rose-pink ribbon

about his wrists and over the black-framed mirror. The flesh tints are as fresh as though painted yesterday. The reflected face in the mirror is intentionally slightly obscured, for Velasquez knew that a picture should have unity and here he avoids diffusion of interest by concentration upon the figure. "A, fully defined head," writes Mr. Amstrong in his The Art of Velasquez, "in this part of the canvas would have destroyed the pattern. It would have introducted a point of great interest to which the eye would have been irresistibly attracted, exactly where it is not wanted. . . . So far as handling goes the picture is the broadest and freest ever painted by Velasquez. The figure is modelled with long sweeps of the brush, travelling with extraordinary audacity and precision over wide planes, and establishing the form in despite, as it were, of probability."

After telling us that Velasquez was out of touch with the mediæval spirit, that he was more interested in atmosphere than in saints' haloes, in God's green grass than in babes' heads with wings, in human character than in the torturings of saints, MacFall, in his History of Painting, continues,—" His heart and his art were as uncritical as a child's, accepting life with a profound wonder. Generous, unjealous, friendly, and without spites, he walked the earth like the gentleman he was; and wrought his art with the majesty and simplicity of the very great. . . . Of the frank joy in life the Spanish Court knew nothing,

and Velasquez recorded nothing. Of these ecstasies of jocund youth, glad to be alive, that can only be uttered in phrase of joyous blithe color, Velasquez at that somber Court could and did see nothing. And what Velasquez did not see he did not utter. He was not a great colorist; he was the most subtle colorist of the sixteen-hundreds. The life he lived was limited; his sense of life was limited; and there is no getting away from it, his art is thereby limited. But within those limits he wrought an art that is the wonder of the wide world."

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	ROSA	BONHEUR		
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Who more perfectly than Rosa Bonheur has written the true psalm of life — of that eternal pulse which throbs within the heart of every being, no matter what position it may hold in the scale of creation! Is there a single touch of her pencil, a single stroke of her brush, which has not the exaltation of nature for its object?

L. Roger-Milès.



THE HORSE FAIR Rosa Bonheur



ROSA BONHEUR

I

Whenever the name of Rosa Bonheur is mentioned, one thinks, first of all, of the "Horse Fair," or as it should be called, "The Horse Market." many erroneous statements have been circulating in newspapers and art magazines that it may be well to turn to the facts concerning this great picture as found in Mr. Gambart's memoirs. The picture was first exhibited in the Salon, 1853, but it was not sold. Two years later Mr. Gambart found her busily engaged in making a reproduction of the picture on a smaller scale. Mr. Gambart offered to buy the large picture, intending to exhibit it and also have it engraved by Thomas Landseer, the brother of the celebrated painter. Rosa Bonheur was pleased with Mr. Gambart's offer and said,—"I have asked you, 40,000 francs for my picture, although in France I cannot get 12,000, and I am pleased at your consenting to my terms. On the other hand, I don't mean to take undue advantage of your liberality. can we arrange matters? Let us see. Well, the picture is very large, and it will be difficult to find a place for it in an engraver's studio. Besides, you

want to exhibit it. Wouldn't it be better for me to paint you a smaller copy?"

Of course, Mr. Gambart very willingly accepted this offer.

"Well then, I will give you this copy into the bargain, and so my conscience will be clear. I shall be able to say that I have sold my canvas for 40,000 francs, and you won't have been too much fleeced."

The smaller picture was then placed in the hands of the engraver. Jacob Bell, seeing it there, was attracted by its charm and force, and bought it for 25,000 francs. He wished to include it in a collection of pictures by Sir Edwin Landseer.

The large picture was exhibited in the Pall Mall Gallery, where it was greatly admired, but, perhaps owing to its size, was not sold. "Not till towards the close of the exhibition, did a bidder present himself, Mr. Wright, an American, who offered me 30.000 francs, leaving me free to retain possession of the painting for two or three years and to continue exhibiting it in England and America. He paid down 10,000 francs earnest-money, the balance remaining over until delivery. Subsequently Mr. Wright claimed a share in the profits of the exhibition, so that when my agent handed him over the picture, he paid me only 13,000 francs. Thus the two paintings — the larger and the smaller brought me only 48,000 francs. However, the sale of the engravings had been very profitable, and the

exhibition of the original established the artist's reputation on such a secure basis that her following pictures were able to command high prices and were bought up immediately when finished."

"When in 1871, after retiring from business," continues Mr. Gambart, "I was preparing to settle at Nice and to form a private gallery of paintings, I wrote to Mr. Wright, offering to buy back the 'Horse Fair' for 50,000 francs. But he did not accept my proposal. Later on, he became involved in some business difficulties and sold this masterpiece to Mr. A. T. Stewart, head of the great New York dry-goods store. On the death of this gentleman, there was an auction sale of his gallery, and the 'Horse Fair' was bought by Samuel Avery, acting on behalf of Cornelius Vanderbilt, who presented it to the New York Metropolitan Museum. price paid at the sale was 250,000 francs. . . . Thus, there are five Horse Fair pictures — the large original in the New York Museum; the first smaller copy that served for Thomas Landseer's engraving, which is now in the National Gallery of London: the second smaller copy, which forms part of a private collection in England: the small water-color at Middlesborough; and the drawing of which I am the fortunate possessor."

The "Horse Fair" has always been a great favorite. It presents a simple scene easily understood by those who sometimes cannot understand

that phase of art which is produced for art's sake; but the more sophisticated have also admired it. It was James Russell Lowell who said, "As for Paul Potter's famous 'Bull,' it is no more to be compared with Rosa Bonheur's 'Horse Fair,' than a stuffed and varnished dolphin with a living one."

The heavy horses with their restless movement, the grooms in varied liveliness of action, the onward sweep of the cavalcade, give one a vivid sense of spirited power. We feel also that we are in the presence of reality; although we may not know that the artist after many visits to horse markets made numerous studies of individual horses for her picture, we feel that these white and bay horses with their rounded backs and powerful necks are horses thoroughly known to the painter, who, seeing animals with the eyes of a lover, never felt the necessity of idealizing them, but strove faithfully to reproduce the force and beauty which they revealed to her.

II

When Moratin, the Castilian poet, was one day visiting the home of the Bonheur family at Bordeaux, when Rosa was but a child, he observed the little girl making designs by lamp-light on sheets of paper.

"For what métier is this child destined?" he asked the father.

"Mon dieu! We are not rich," came the answer. "She must work. She will be a dressmaker."

"Come now! Don't you know that would be a crime? Why, she is a born artist, and will be the perpetual consolation, while she lives, for her father's ill luck!"

"The only thing noble about my parents," once said Rosa Bonheur, "was their character, which is more than many so-called aristocrats can boast." The genealogical table of the Bonheur family shows that for three generations the ancestors of Rosa were cooks—cooks, of course, who practised their calling with the skill and devotion that made it an art, but still no more than cooks. However, the father, Raymond Bonheur, was an artist in painting. Although three of his ancestors were but cooks, twelve of his fourteen lineal descendants were painters, sculptors, composers, and architects. Among these was his daughter Rosa, the most famous of his five children and the most famous of the women painters of the nineteenth century.

Rosa was born in Bordeaux, France, March 22, 1822. Upon the death of his wife, when Rosa was seven years old, the father moved to Paris, where he hoped to win that success which is the dream of every artist. He never became great, but the little girl who loved to watch her father at his work, and who liked still more to take rambles with

him through the woods and country fields, early achieved that fame and prosperity which the father never acquired.

When Rosa decided to become a painter, she spent four years copying the masters in the Louvre before she concluded that her life work would be the painting of animals. She loved nature and had a passion for animated nature. In later years when she lived in the Rue d'Assas she owned and kept near her one horse, one he-goat, one otter, seven lapwings, two hoopoes, one monkey, one sheep, one donkey, and two dogs.

When she visited England in 1856 she wrote to a friend,—"I arrived yesterday at Mr. Gambart's country house, after a twenty-four-hours sea voyage. You see that I am quite experienced, and shall be able one of these days to go sketching to America or China. I am bringing back a cargo, not of studies, but of living animals, of which I intend to make some fine pictures, if I can. I have a bull, two cows, two young bulls, four sheep, and a calf. They are so picturesque and their color so beautiful that I should like to paint them all at the same time. I mean to peg away as if my life depended on it. fact, I have all I want, except sufficient time. word. I am in ecstasies over what I have seen. a rolling stone gathers no moss, and I haven't collected much in the way of studies. I must make it up with the animals, which have cost me dear, although I bought them cheaper than in France. I shouldn't like to fail with a single one, they are so beautiful to paint."

In Stanton's Reminiscences of Rosa Bonheur there is an anecdote related by Mme. Demont-Breton concerning a lioness owned by Rosa Bonheur. "She was tender and as faithful as a dog," said Rosa; "sometimes she would stand on her hind legs and put her front ones on my shoulders in order to caress me more easily. But she fell ill of the same disease as her brother. I nursed her as if she had been a human being, going to see her and comfort her several times a day. Once I found her so weak that I said to Georges Cain who was there: 'My poor lioness can't move; she is going to die.' few moments later, I heard a velvet-soft step down in the hall. I went to see what it was, and found that it was my lioness, who, though dving, had made an effort to see me for the last time. She knew I had gone upstairs. She heard my voice, and had crawled on to the stairs in order to reach me. went down a little way and she stopped. When I came to her, I took her in my arms and stroked She lay back and looked at me like a person who thinks, and died thus gazing on me. I believe in the good God and in His Paradise for the just. but I do not approve of everything in religion. instance, I find it monstrous that animals should be said to have no soul. My lioness loved.

therefore, had more soul than certain people who do not love."

Ш

In a magazine sketch Jules Claretie, a member of the French Academy, writes, "Once more I can see Rosa Bonheur as I write. I behold her surrounded by those countless designs and studies, now dispersed and cherished by collectors. She was seductive in a sweet and gracious way that I love to recall. I can see her as she moved about at work, ever alert, smiling, and interested. From her girdle usually hung a bunch of about sixty keys, which made a noise as she walked. Order is a great thing, and for that reason, perhaps, she usually left the house doors open, as well as those of all her cabinets and bureaus."

Paul Chardin has given us a more detailed description of the personal appearance of this great artist: "She was of medium height, if anything under it, and toward middle life grew stout. She had a round face, a high forehead, and an abundance of silky, chestnut hair, cut short and parted at the side. Her features were regular, her nose thin and slightly aquiline. Her mouth was large, and the lips, which were somewhat thick, were often compressed by reflection. Whenever they opened in a smile, two white, regular rows of teeth became visible. Her hands were small and supple, her fingers long and slender, with a tapering form that showed

the skill they possessed. The most striking characteristic was, however, the expression of the eyes, which were of a warm dark-brown color. pression was frank, loval, and scrutinizing, always on the alert to observe and investigate. Her temperament, especially earnest and meditative, could yet yield to mirth, and would suddenly pass from grave to gay, from melancholy to laughter. voice, clear and sonorous, would then re-echo throughout the house, and her imagination indulge in a thousand playful tricks, stooping from the woman to the child. Her studio costume helped the illusion that she might be of the male sex, it being invariably a blue peasant's smock and a man's trousers. When she received company or when she went to Paris, she resumed her woman's dress, a black skirt and a sort of black velvet cloak, half cassock, with a rather masculine cut, beneath which showed a kind of waistcoat which was buttoned straight up."

IV

The Empress Eugenie called upon Rosa Bonheur in her studio. These visits, one of which was the occasion of the bestowal of the cross of the Legion of Honor, have been entertainingly described by M. Peyrol, Sr.:—

One afternoon when Rosa Bonheur and I were quite alone at By, the Court came for the first time

to the studio. . . . We heard out on the highroad the tinkle of carriage bells, and the clatter of horses' hoofs. Listening for a moment Rosa said:

"I feel in my bones that this is Madame—, coming to bother me. She herself isn't bad; but she always brings with her a lot of uninteresting folk. She ought to see that this disturbs me dreadfully. Do go and tell Felicite to say that I am out."

I was just starting to carry out my sister-in-law's instructions, when the door suddenly opened and the maid, all in a fluster, rushed in exclaiming:

"Mademoiselle, Mademoiselle, it's the Court, the Empress!"

When this announcement was made, Rosa was attired in her blue working blouse, which she immediately started to take off. But in her haste and in the excitement of the moment she had forgotten to undo the top button of the garment and, consequently, her head wouldn't go through! For an instant we both feared she might be caught in this ludicrous position by the imperial party. Finally, however, she succeeded in extricating herself from the plaguy blouse and getting into a sort of jacket which she wore indoors, just as the Empress, accompanied by a dozen ladies and gentlemen of the Court circle, swept into the studio. Rosa, who quickly recovered her composure, to which the Empress's charming manner contributed not a little,

showed the distinguished company some of her work, I aiding as best I could. After a pretty long stay, the Empress, who seemed pleased, retired, leaving Rosa and myself somewhat stunned by this kind but unexpected visit.

At the second call of the Empress, it was my wife who happened to be with Rosa at the moment. But they had been informed the night before of the intended visit. It was on this occasion that the cross of the Legion of Honor was bestowed on Rosa, the Empress herself attaching the decoration to the lapel of Rosa's jacket.

V

On a chilly May day in 1899, Rosa Bonheur made a business trip to Paris. Driving about in an open cab, she caught a severe cold. In a day or two she returned to By and took to her bed. On the night of May 25, just a week after her trip to Paris, in the words of her nephew, who was present at her bedside, "The sufferer's life was quietly extinguished like a lamp without oil."

On the 29th a short service, attended principally by the simple folk of the village which she had so long honored by making it her place of residence, was held at Thomey Church. It is recorded, and it is not hard to believe the record, that her faithful dogs, penned up in the court-yard, howled disconsolately as the little funeral procession started for

the church. How this incident would have appealed to this lover of animals, who "generally considered the canine race more humane than inhuman humans!" With Tennyson she thought

> "That not a worm is cloven in vain; That not a moth with vain desire Is shrivell'd in a fruitless fire, Or but subserves another's gain."

On the afternoon of that same day a second service was performed, this one taking place in the chapel of the famous cemetery in Paris, Père Lachaise. The rules of the Legion of Honor, to which distinguished order Rosa Bonheur belonged, prescribe that there shall be a military escort at the funeral of a member. But in accord with the well known antipathy of the artist for display, this feature was omitted. French custom calls for speeches over the remains of a distinguished person, but no speeches were given because of the desire of the artist that at her funeral the customary orations be dispensed with.

Not knowing this desire of Rosa Bonheur, Bouguereau, the French artist, came to the funeral with a short oration which he expected to deliver. This unpublished appreciation, after the death of Bouguereau, was handed over to Mr. Stanton, the biographer of Rosa Bonheur.

A few extracts from this eulogium will prove a fitting close to this brief sketch:

"The fame which, for fifty years, has encircled the name of this talented artist, has been heightened by the mysterious charm which surrounded this woman, painter of wild and domestic animals, living retired from the world, among her dear models virile, energetic, original, but modest and good. . . . But these artistic triumphs served only to increase the efforts of Rosa Bonheur to make herself worthy She was unaffected either by flattery or of them. by the enthusiasm of others for her work. Though her artistic life was passed amidst various phases of the modern schools, she ever remained true to her own conception of art and acted only upon her own inspirations. The conscientious and sober stamp given to her first efforts characterized all her art work to the end. Though her pictures be many, her studies are almost innumerable. There was no sign of vanity in her. The faithful worship of nature made her modest. When the aim is high, one can only approximate success and this success never gives birth to pride. . . .

"This woman, so charmingly simple, was the only one of her sex who had the right to display on her breast the rosette of an officer of the Legion of Honor. Though seventy-seven years of age, she told me (a few weeks before her death) of the re-

turn of health and strength, of her desire to work on and of the joy that she felt because it was so., She left me with a gay 'Au Revoir!'

"Rosa Bonheur was a grand and valiant artist, a true and charitable friend, whose life-work is beautiful and will not perish. Her soul was good and, like her art, immortal!"

VAN DYCK

Van Dyck has not, like Rubens, the love of power and of life for life itself; more refined, more chivalric, born with a sensitive and even melancholy nature, elegiac in his sacred subjects, aristocratic in his portraits, he depicts with less glowing and more sympathetic color noble, tender, and charming figures whose generous and delicate souls are filled with sweet and sad emotions unknown to his master.

H. TAINE.



THE VIRGIN WITH CHILD AND THE TWO DONORS Van Dyck

VAN DYCK

1

Before me lies a large German book with 537 reproductions of the art of Van Dyck, an imposing number, yet only a little more than a third of his known paintings. Even the tyro in art appreciation, as he turns over the pages, most of which contain full-page reproductions, must be impressed by the grace and charm of the paintings; he will also conclude that the painter of these portraits must have been a man who associated much with aristocrats. For here are neither the peasants of Millet nor the sober-looking burghers of Rembrandt. Instead we see King Charles I of England with his royal spouse, Henrietta Maria, the same King Charles as a knight of the Garter, King Charles standing by the side of his horse, for this painter was the royal favorite who showed his appreciation of royal favors by painting numerous portraits of the unfortunate monarch who lost his head. Of King Charles there are extant thirty-six portraits and it is probable that some have been lost.

Then, too, there are princes and princesses, dukes, earls, duchesses, cardinals, bishops, and archbishops.

His jewelled women are fair and calm in their conscious superiority, his well-groomed, handsome men stand aloof from the din and worry of the ignoble herd. We know that we are in the presence of men and women of high breeding and princely living, but we also feel that they are posing, that their serenity, which becomes almost monotonous, has been assumed to make an impression upon posterity. We cannot escape the feeling of artificiality.

For uncompromising reality we must go to Velasquez; for subtlety and power we must turn to Titian; for the character that reveals itself in the depths of the eyes and the curves of the mouth, we must turn to Rembrandt. And yet Van Dyck is a great painter, though he falls short of attaining that upper zone where dwell the chosen few who to technique and talent and industry have added a philosophy which pondered deeply on the nature of things as well as on the things of nature, and an imagination which transfigured reality into beauty.

TT

Van Dyck, the seventh child in a family of twelve children, was born in Antwerp, 1599. He is a Flemish painter, though, because of his long residence and important work in England, he is sometimes included among English painters and is called the founder of the English school of portrait-

painting, a school later distinguished by the fine work of Reynolds, Gainsborough, and Rompey. Rembrandt was the son of a miller, Rubens the son of a lawyer, Van Dyck the son of a prosperous silk merchant; the father of Ruskin was a wealthy wine merchant, and the father of the visionary Shelley was a matter-of-fact English country gentleman. It seems that what we call genius cannot be explained by an examination into the occupation and social status of its immediate paternal progenitors.

It is easier to remember three facts than one, especially if the three facts have any relation. If I wish to remember when Darwin was born I recollect that he was born in the same year in which Lincoln, Gladstone, Poe, Mendelssohn, and Tennyson were born, the year 1809. And so, too, when I wish to remember the date of Walt Whitman's birth, I recall that he was born in the year 1819, the year of the birth of James Russell Lowell and George Eliot. Van Dyck, we have said, was born in 1599; that is the year of the birth of Velasquez, the year of the death of Edmund Spenser, the one the painter's painter and the other the poet's poet.

Far more important than the year of his birth is the era into which he was born, the era of Shakspere and Cervantes, Molière and Montaigne, Frobisher and Hawkins, Bacon and Raleigh, of Rubens and Rembrandt, though the last named was born

seven years after the birth of Van Dyck. Is it not curious that if we were to select eight of the foremost painters of the world, four of them, Leonardo, Michelangelo, Raphael, and Titian, can be grouped about another familiar date, 1620, for all four were living when the Pilgrim Fathers landed at Plymouth Rock. The latter fact suggests a striking contrast. What a world of difference between the world of Rubens and Velasquez and Van Dyck and the world of the little New England colony!

While Van Dyck was still but a boy he found a place in the studio of the renowned Rubens. following story, found in all the fuller biographies of the painter, indicates that the youth was soon regarded by his fellow-students as a leader. afternoon when Rubens was taking his customary horseback ride after he had finished his labors for the day, the curiosity of his pupils overcame their good manners and they persuaded the old keeper of the studio to open the door of the private studio where Rubens kept his latest products from the gen-They wished to see what the master might eral eve. be working upon with such energy and secrecy. they crowded around a freshly-painted canvas young Diepenbeck accidentally brushed against the arm and chin of a Virgin Mary, smudging the careful and brilliant effect of the great artist. The young men were thrown into a panic of fear, for Rubens on discovering the damage would learn of their unmannerly prank. Then one of their number called upon Van Dyck as the cleverest of them all to repair the damage. Accordingly during the next two hours of remaining daylight the young disciple busied himself so effectively that on the morrow when Rubens looked at his picture his only comment was,—" That arm and chin are by no means the poorest part of yesterday's work." Later on discovering that a strange hand had been at work on his picture, he readily forgave the apologizing students for their unseemly curiosity.

That Van Dyck soon became the leading pupil of Rubens is attested by a document of March 29, 1620, in which Rubens and the Jesuits of Antwerp entered into an agreement for the decoration of a church. Herein it is expressly stipulated that after Rubens has himself sketched in the thirty-nine pictures, the coloring might be done "by Van Dyck" and other pupils. It is significant that Van Dyck is the only one mentioned by name. In that same year a letter from an Antwerp agent to the Earl of Arundel, who desired Van Dyck to come to England, contains testimony to the glowing fame of Rubens's most talented pupil. "Van Dyck lives with Rubens," so runs the letter, "and his works are beginning to be scarcely less esteemed than those of his master. He is a young man of one-and-twenty. His parents are persons of considerable property in this city; and it will be difficult therefore to induce

him to remove; expecially as he must perceive the rapid fortune which Rubens is amassing."

Van Dyck did go to England; the first time, however, he remained but a very short time, returning to take up his residence at The Hague, employed in painting portraits of the Prince and Princess of Orange and their family, as well as those of other eminent persons.

Then in the spring of 1623, just as Velasquez had advised Murillo, so Rubens advised his pupil, "Go to Italy!" Murillo never went, Van Dyck started, was delayed by a love affair when but a few miles on the road, but finally reached Italy. When he parted from Rubens, master and pupil exchanged gifts as tokens of mutual affection, Van Dyck giving Rubens a portrait of Isabella Brant, Rubens's wife, the portrait now in the Hermitage at St. Petersburg, also an "Ecce Homo," and a "Christ in the Garden of Olives"; Rubens gave Van Dyck the finest horse in his stable.

Just off the main road from Antwerp to Brussels lies the little village of Saventhem, nestling quietly in a fair valley. As Rubens neared the place he possibly remembered that there lived in Saventhem a charming young woman by the name of Anna Van Ophem, whom he had met at Antwerp. Whether this be true or not, when he reached Saventhem and met the fascinating Anna, he concluded that life was far more interesting than art, especially life as em-

bodied in the smiles and conversation of the fair maid of Saventhem. So, unlike the youth in Longfellow's poem of "Excelsior," when the maiden invited him to stay and rest, Van Dyck stayed and basking in the warmth of youthful love seemed to forget all about the sunny skies of Italy.

The attractive Anna, however, did not allow her handsome lover to spend all his time in love-making. She persuaded him to paint two pictures for the little village church. In one of these she appeared as the Virgin Mary, while her parents represented St. Joachim and St. Anna. This picture has been lost, one tradition reporting that French foragers cut it up to make grain-bags. This first picture so delighted the church authorities that they at once asked for another, promising to pay 200 florins. The result was "St. Martin Dividing his Cloak with Two Beggars," a picture still adorning and making the fame of the little church, though repeated efforts have been made to remove it. In 1758 the priest of the parish, without consulting with others having authority to sell, agreed to sell it for 4000 florins to a collector of The Hague. But the peasants, hearing that the picture had been taken down and packed for removal, with blunderbusses and pitchforks rushed to the church, put the collector to flight, and replaced the picture. From 1806 to 1815 it hung in the Louvre, the spoil of the Napoleonic invasion. Then it was returned to the church. A

number of biographers, each one accepting an unfounded report, relate that a rich American offered 100,000 francs to some unscrupulous collectors if they would secure the painting, by fair or foul means. This reminds one of the hysterical cry that arose from a few French, who, when the "Mona Lisa" was stolen from the Louvre, suspected the American American millionaires who care for art millionaire. Of what possible use would a stolen are not fools. Van Dyck or Leonardo be to an American millionaire? Where would he keep it? What would he do with it? American millionaires may have many sins to answer for, but stealing the art treasures of Europe is not one of them. The many paintings by old masters that have been brought to the United States in recent years have been acquired in the ordinary channels of trade, and for every American buyer who cared more for a painting than for his money, there has been a European who cared more for money than for his painting.

Rubens, hearing that his favorite pupil, though not under the enchanting sorcery of a Circe, was wavering in his purpose to go to Italy because of his infatuation for a rustic maiden, sent letters of expostulation, and finally a messenger to Saventhem, urging Van Dyck to continue his journey to Italy, where he would come under the influences that would further him in his laudable ambition to gain eminence in that career which he had so propitiously begun.

To this appeal Van Dyck gave heed, going to Italy and studying and painting at Venice, at Genoa, at Rome, at Palermo, at Turin, at Florence, and possibly at Milan and Brescia. In 1626, after an absence of more than four years, he returned to his native city.

Ш

Van Dyck returned to Antwerp with greater ability and with greater reputation than when he had left almost five years before. During those years in Italy he had with his usual fecundity produced numerous paintings, rumors of whose excellence had reached his native city. But unfortunately for Van Dyck, Rubens, now in the full tide of prosperity, so far overshadowed his former pupil, that Van Dyck had great difficulty in finding a market for his work. One day the elder David Teniers, happening to meet Van Dyck on the street, asked him how he was "You see that fat brewer who has succeeding. just passed us," said the painter; "I offered the other day to paint his portrait for two pistoles, and he laughed in my face, saying that I was asking too much. If the wind does not change very soon, I can assure you that I shall not stay much longer in this town."

Although Van Dyck's fortune gradually changed for the better, his greatest success began with his removal to England, an event taking place in 1632.

It is said that King Charles I on seeing a Van Dyck portrait of Laniere, his royal master of music, had been so well impressed that he had expressed the wish that the artist would come to England. At any rate, we find Van Dyck in England in April, 1632, beginning a nine-year career of fortune, fame, and princely living oftentimes bordering on extravagance and dissipation, and ending with the death of the artist at the early age of forty-two.

Charles I commissioned Inigo Jones, the architect, to provide a house for the painter, who soon after his arrival was appointed painter in ordinary to His Majesty. The Flemish painter with his suave manners and courtly presence was so acceptable to the English monarch that not only did he bestow knighthood upon his favorite, but, as he touched him lightly on the shoulder, "threw over it a gold chain from which hung the king's portrait surrounded by diamonds." The king found Van Dyck so companionable that he frequently visited the studio of the painter, discussing art while watching the artist In October, 1633, the king bestowed a pension of £200 on the painter, a gift containing more honor than substance, for we find that owing to the poverty of the royal exchequer the pension was seldom paid.

To a painter enjoying the royal favor, commissions for work would not be lacking. Soon the requests for sittings came not "single spies but in

battalions." If the royal family wanted portraits by the score, My Lord This and My Lady That must have at least one. As we look at his portraits we see the Earl of Devonshire, the Countess of Devonshire, the Countess of Carlisle, the Duchess of Richmond, the Duchess of Lenox, Lady Jane Wharton, the Earl of Arundel, the Duke of Richmond-Lenox, the Earl of Newport, the Earl of Pembroke, and, in the language of Kipling, "the race is yet to run," for we have just made a beginning. "Van Dyck and fashion ruled the hour," said a writer in an English magazine of 1875. "His studio in Blackfriars was graced with as noble company as Whitehall; indeed, with the same com-The king himself was often there, and with him the artist's other illustrious and perhaps more liberal patrons. . . . Fancy may reproduce that studio, with its aristocratic inmates, silent, in presence of Charles, but loud enough in his absence. . . . Some paid homage of ultra-gallantry to Margaret Leman (or Lemon, the mistress of Van Dvck). Others gave words of condescending praise, now and then, to Van Dyck's accomplished assistants."

Living with princes, Van Dyck felt that he ought to live like a prince. He had seen the magnificent way of living practiced by his countryman Rubens, and his natural inclination led him to imitate the lavish scale indulged in by his English patrons. Even while in Rome he had been called the "Cavalier Painter," because of his extravagance. It is not strange then that even now when fortune smiled so lavishly upon him his extravagance kept him in need of money. Stranger yet is his attempt to increase his income by pursuing that ignis fatuus that ruined the lives of so many pseudo-scientists in the Middle Ages,—he began searching for the philosopher's stone, that mythical something which will transmute the baser metals into pure gold. Forgetting that he had an artist's brush which was of far more value than the philosopher's stone he wasted his earnings. "He became the dupe of every kind of wandering charlatan; Polish chemists, German vagabonds, and Italian pickpockets all came to prey upon the misguided artist. His legitimate earnings vanished in smoke and went to fill the pockets of miscreants."

The tradition is that King Charles, seeing the extravagance and foolishness of his favorite painter, thought that marriage might be a wholesome corrective and a refining influence, so he sent Buckingham and Digby to suggest marriage and even point out the lady whom the king had selected. The lady in question, Maria Ruthven, was the governess of the Prince of Wales and his two sisters. She was a Scotch woman of noble birth. Her picture, now in the Pinakothek at Munich, was painted by the artist-husband about 1640. It is that of a sweet, refined, modest and attractive young woman. Their

married life was of short duration, lasting less than two years, for on the 9th of December, 1641, Van Dyck died at his house in Blackfriars. He was buried in Old St. Paul's by the side of the famous John of Gaunt. The fire of 1666 destroyed all traces of his grave, so that in the language of an old writer, "nothing now remains of him but his immortal paintings."

ΙV

When Jabac, a patron of the fine arts and friend of Van Dyck's, spoke to the painter about the rapidity with which he worked, he was told that in his youth he had labored carefully and patiently to acquire reputation and celerity of execution, so that in later days he might earn a living by doing his work both well and quickly. Jabac, according to De Piles, a biographer of Van Dyck, gave this account of the painter's method: "He appointed a certain day and hour for the person he had to paint, and never worked longer than one hour at a time upon each portrait, whether in rubbing-in or finishing; when his clock told the hour, he rose and made a bow to the sitter, as much as to say that enough was done for that day, and then arranged the day and the hour for the next sitting, after which his servant came to prepare fresh brushes and palette, while he received another person to whom he had given an appointment. He thus worked at several portraits in one day with extraordinary expedition.

After having lightly sketched the face, he put the sitter in an attitude which he had previously meditated, and with gray paper and black and white crayons he drew, in a quarter of an hour, the figure and drapery, which he arranged in a grand manner and with exquisite taste. He then handed over the drawing to skillful persons whom he had about him, to paint it from the sitter's own clothes, which were sent on purpose at Van Dyck's request. The assistants having done their best with the draperies from nature, he went lightly over them, and soon produced by his genius the art and truth which we there admire. As for the hands, he had in his employment persons of both sexes who served as models."

V

The first as well as the foremost influence in the art of Van Dyck is Rubens. His early paintings, whether the subject be mythological, Biblical, or the portrait of a prince, are copies of the manner of his great teacher. Had he gone no further in his development, he would be remembered merely as an apt pupil of Rubens. But there is a marked difference between the temperaments of the two men. Van Dyck's talent was not in harmony with the almost riotous exuberance of Rubens; as Jules Guiffrey points out, Van Dyck "lacks the creative genius, the richness of invention, the dramatic instinct of that, which, in short, constitutes a powerful origi-

But these are the very qualities possessed in such abundance by Rubens. The second influence is the art of Italy, especially that portion of Italian art as embodied in the work of Titian and Tin-The years spent in Italy, the sunny land toretto. so different from the somber northland of his birth. impressed upon him the value of glowing colors and vigorous contrasts. He also saw that a portrait could be made to be a picture with architectural and scenic background, instead of a mere portrait. never escaped fully from the Italian influence, and those of us who are not professional critics do not object to Van Dyck's glowing colorings, oftentimes relieved by "masses of blue and other cool colors," for who does not like warmth and brilliancy of coloring? In his third period he attains an independence which stamps him with a distinction all his own. His art now possesses a charming delicacy which places him close to the few foremost portrait-painters. That his reputation is not so high as it once was is due to the change of opinion as to what constitutes perfect art. Today we care less for brilliancy and more for sincerity, less for delicacy and more for solidity, less for refinement and more for fidelity to nature, less for the beauty that is stately and serene and more for the mystic hints that suggest the foam of perilous seas in faëry lands forlorn, and that is why in the great Pantheon of Art we place Titian. and Velasquez, and Rembrandt above Van Dyck.

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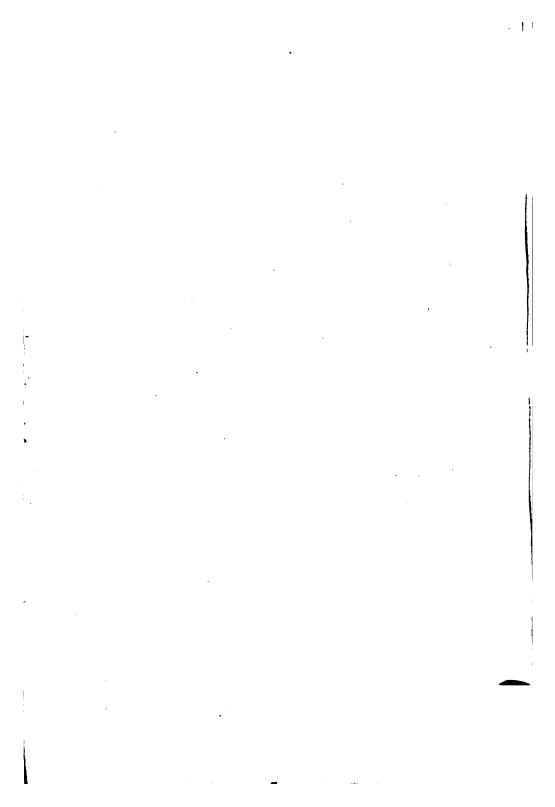
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